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HISTORY
OF THE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH,
SALISBURY AND AMESBURY.

FOUR DISCOURSES

BY THE PASTOR,

B. P. BYRAM.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE CHURCH.

SALISBURY:
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1860.

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SALISBURY MILLS, MAY 21st, 1860.

Reverend and Dear Pastor :

The undersigned having been appointed a Committee for this purpose, by the First Baptist Church of Christ in Salisbury and Amesbury, hereby tender to you their heartfelt thanks, for the several timely discourses, recently delivered by you before said Church and Society, on the commencement and progress of the first Baptist Church in this place ; and respectfully request a copy for the press.

REV. B. P. BYRAM, }
Salisbury. }

In behalf of the Church,

STEPHEN WOODMAN,
EBENEZER TUCKER,
BENJAMIN S. BLAKE,
FREDERICK BAGLEY,
REUBEN EVANS. } Committee.

SALISBURY MILLS, June 1st, 1860.

Messrs. Stephen Woodman, Ebenezer Tucker, Benj. S. Blake, Frederick Bagley and Reuben Evans.

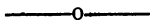
Gentlemen :—

Your kind note of May 21st, was duly received. While it affords me high satisfaction, that my efforts in gathering up the fragmentary outlines of the Church, have been appreciated and cordially received by an affectionate and endeared Church and Society, it is a matter of sincere regret that so much that might have been of interest and profit in the annals of the past, is irrevocably lost.

If with their imperfections, you shall deem these brief sketches worthy of publication, they are at your disposal.

I am, gentlemen, with great respect, yours, &c.,
B. P. BYRAM.

SALISBURY AND AMESBURY BAPTIST CHURCH.



Organized as a Branch of the Brentwood Baptist Church,

September 27th, 1780.

Recognized as an Independent Church, September 14th, 1821.

OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH, 1860:

PASTOR,

B. P. BYRAM, Settled April 1st, 1850.

DEACONS:

• **STEPHEN WOODMAN, elected Dec. 25, 1846.**

EBENEZER TUCKER, " June 22, 1859.

BENJAMIN S. BLAKE, " June 22, 1859.

CLERK,

REUBEN EVANS.

TREASURER,

DEA. STEPHEN WOODMAN.

HISTORICAL DISCOURSES:

I

The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation: He is *my* God and I will prepare him a habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him.—EXODUS 15: 2nd.

These words express the pious gratitude of the devout Israelite on a review of the Lord's dealings with him and his fathers before him. The Lord has been a God of salvation, —the strength and song of his people in every age. Hence these words of lofty, holy triumph. God should be adored in exalted strains and acknowledged in heartfelt song. In such emotions of pious gratitude and humble thanksgiving the people of God in all ages may unite, for,

"The saints on earth, and all the dead,
But one communion make."

The Church of a former dispensation, in its conflicts and its triumphs, but shadowed forth the sublimer and more glorious struggles and victories of the church of the redeemed in all time till the final consummation of all things.

I trust, my brethren, that you are neither insensible to the immeasurable debt of gratitude due to the Redeemer, nor yet, unprepared with humble and joyous spirits to accept the pious language of our text, "The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation. He is my God and I will prepare him a habitation, my father's God and I will exalt him."

In striving to sketch the worthy deeds and to embalm the memories of the pious dead, we discharge a grateful and sacred obligation. It is the high privilege of the living to rescue from the oblivion of the past, those invaluable records which the sweeping waves of the succeeding generations are fast obliterating, and to preserve in a concise and comprehensive form a continued history of those incidents and events, which are developed in the Church's struggles in maintaining the truth and her triumphs through the power and the grace of God. It is a laudable work to adorn the imperishable chronicles of faithful history, with the names of the benefactors of their race who have been pioneers in every good work—and especially is this due to those in the cause of truth and righteousness—men, whose honest virtues, devoted piety and useful services have been approved and rewarded by God. History teaches by example. Its authentic annals, though brief, may yet be reliable. While imperfections and defects may mar the beauty of its narratives, yet truth shall be found highly to illustrate the faithfulness of God, in the deliverance and support afforded his people in times of persecution and human extremity; and thus also a merited tribute of grateful remembrance shall be paid to the honored names of a former age. Many invaluable historical facts are undoubtedly now concealed in the bosom of individuals soon to pass away from us, and many imperfect records now exist as mere bald outlines of important incidents and services which need the living witness to furnish the proper material for filling up the picture, or all will become irrevocably lost to the generations to follow. Much of our noble early denominational history is already lost. Individuals of distinguished usefulness have finished their course and gone to their reward. Churches and Institutions

whose interesting histories date far back in the past have preserved for posterity no record of sufficient accuracy and fullness, of their early trials and God's gracious deliverances in their behalf. The individual lives, it is true, in his influence over society, for the good never die; churches also live in their members, and institutions of usefulness flourish still in renewed vigor. But in how many cases, the services rendered by them to the cause of civil liberty, religion and gospel truth; the sufferings they endured and the providences which marked their early history and cheered them in the days of their feebleness, have been forgotten, or perhaps unheard of by those who have entered into their labors and now enjoy the rich fruits of their toils and sufferings. They passed through perilous persecutions—severe civil disabilities, endured the loss of reputation and worldly interests, in order to maintain inviolate the faith of the gospel. The scanty records of this church now available to us, contain the most honorable memorials of the devoted love of our fathers to the “worship and ordinances of the Gospel in their primitive sacredness and purity.” In presenting an historical outline of this Church and Society, it becomes necessary for me briefly to refer to the spirit of the times and the opinions then prevalent, as well as to the men, whose names and deeds will ever live fragrant and holy in all coming generations.

Those were memorable days—scenes of appalling magnitude were being enacted—the thrilling associations clustering around their revolutionary battle fields were daily augmented by additional conflicts and struggles which rendered their country in all its parts sacred ground. The obscurity which invested “the dim and shadowy visions” of a remote past were in all minds giving place to newer and stranger events

connected with the struggles of their country for freedom—they lived in the days of the American Revolution, in days of sacrifices, self-denials and sufferings for the right—they acted amid scenes invested with a grandeur and importance which marked that age for all time as one, the most eventful and illustrious recorded in the annals of the world. The spirit of '76 in its freshness and vigor was diffused throughout the land—the question struggling for solution in every purely patriotic breast, was not, what is safe, pleasant and conducive to personal comfort and ease, but what is duty—to God—to truth—to our children and to the world. That was the spirit which dictated and signed the glorious Declaration of American Independence, and that was the spirit that roused the magnanimous soul of our fathers to assert the nobler doctrine of “soul freedom.” They, in all humility and devout piety evoked the help of the same Almighty Ruler, whose wisdom and power were guiding on these struggling Colonies to a final victory—and they sought not in vain. Their laurels, like those of their country’s patriots, still freshen and bloom o’er their graves, while we hope that their spirit has not wholly left their posterity, nor our father’s God ceased to be our strength and our song.

The Salisbury and Amesbury Baptist Church had a common origin with other churches of the same faith and order. Great fundamental principles,—principles, cardinal to the system of Christian faith, were to be asserted and defended, and the Great Head of the Church called forth his people to their mission. These vitally important truths are, many of them, now universally received, though not always practically carried out by all evangelical churches in this land. “The founders of the Denomination demanded a completed and consistent refor-

mation and parted with their brethren only when they failed to plant themselves on the immovable rock of the Divine Word."

We give the testimony of Mr. Bancroft, the American Historian, referring to the Baptists in the days of the Reformation under Luther, which sect we carefully should distinguish from "Anabaptists" and "mad men of Munster," but with whom their opponents seemed determined to confound them to make them odious in public esteem. Speaking of the "Baptists," Mr. Bancroft says:—"They, with more consistency than Luther, applied the doctrines of the Reformation to the civil relations of life and threatened an end to king-craft—spiritual dominion—tithes and vassalage. The party was trodden under foot with foul reproaches and most arrogant scorn and its history is written in the blood of myriads of the German peasantry, but its principles, safe in their immortality, escaped with Roger Williams to Providence, and his colony is the witness that naturally the paths of the Baptists were paths of freedom, pleasantness and peace." This is the testimony of an impartial historian, not a Baptist, nor one ever suspected of any particular biases towards the denomination, and is therefore all the more valuable. A candid, truth loving mind, if able to trace out our history, will ever honestly discriminate between the true religious men of our faith in Germany and the fanatical men called "Anabaptists." The history of the founding and the growth of the Baptist Churches in this State, is replete with the history of a calm endurance of persecutions and sufferings, from sincere love to their Divine Master, and an invincible confidence in the final triumph of the principles they had espoused.

Preachers of the Baptist denomination visited and preached

in this vicinity, at irregular periods, as their time and convenience would allow, for the space of some years before there was a Baptist society gathered. Churches were already established in Newton, N. H., Haverhill, Mass., and some other places in the vicinity. It is, however, a melancholy page in the history of these Churches and of all the Churches of the Baptist faith gathered in this vicinity during these years; that, these devoted bands of Christian disciples of the same common Redeemer, constituted into churches for the preservation and vindication of the Ordinances of the New Testament; walking in Gospel Order and maintaining the purity and faith of the gospel, should have been assailed, and their assemblies broken up by storms of persecution, instigated by the professed followers of the same Lord and Master—yet these persecuted ones were accused of no crimes, social or political—of no heresy or schism so far as the cardinal doctrines of the evangelical creed were involved; but the sum and front of their offence was, a strict and conscientious conformity to the letter of the New Testament, instead of the commands of the established church, in their observance of the ordinances which Christ had left them that they should follow his steps. To them, the ordinance of baptism, was a living monument of the Savior's death and resurrection; the God appointed emblem of the believers dying to sin and living again unto righteousness, and they could not substitute for this positive institution of the Savior, the commands and ordinances of men. As the rise of the Baptist denomination in these parts is intimately connected with the early history of this Church, I shall be excused for giving a condensed history of its commencement from "BACKUS' HISTORY OF THE BAPTISTS OF NEW ENGLAND." Says he: "A remarkable providence of God opened

the way for the dissemination of the truth in these parts, and gave rise to the rapid and extensive spread of Baptist sentiments throughout this vicinity.

Mrs. Scammon, a woman of fervent piety and understandingly attached to Baptist principles, removed from Rehoboth, Mass., on her marriage, to Stratham, N. H., where, though alone in her sentiments and execrated by those with whom she associated, she unwaveringly maintained and defended the truth, and lived to see the rapid dissemination of her principles. In the latter part of her days, she came into possession of a small treatise entitled "Norcott on Baptism." She was firmly persuaded that the arguments and forcible statements of that little work would convince her neighbors and friends if they could be prevailed upon to read it. She accordingly went to Boston with the little pamphlet to procure its republication. She, however, found the work already printed; purchased and carried home a large number of copies, and distributed them to all around her in faith and with fervent prayer. A church sprang up in Stratham, and from that others were soon formed, and thus the light reflected from the diffusion of that little book, and the prayers and efforts of that pious lady led to the wide extension of the truth. Among the most eminent and distinguished of the converts to Baptist principles, we find the name of Dr. Samuel Shepherd. He was born in the East Parish of Salisbury in 1739—was converted at the age of sixteen, and united with the Congregational church in that section of the town on the 4th of January, 1756.

Dr. Shepherd, by profession a physician, one day on a visit to a patient, took up the little tract referred to, "Norcott on Baptism," and becoming deeply interested in it, read it carefully, and at length fully embraced the sentiments it advocated.

Shortly afterwards he avowed his belief in the sentiments of the Baptists, and was baptized into the fellowship of the Baptist church by Dr. Hezekiah Smith of Haverhill in June, 1770. Soon after embracing the sentiments of the Baptists, he felt himself called of God to the work of the Christian ministry, and was accordingly ordained at Stratham in 1771, by Drs. Stillman of Boston, Smith of Haverhill, and Manning of Providence, and became pastor of that church. This same year his preaching became abundantly blessed by the Great Head of the church in Brentwood, and a church was there constituted, of which he became the pastor." This church grew rapidly under his ministrations of the word. He extended his faithful and laborious efforts to build up the kingdom of Christ throughout all that region, and was greatly owned of God,—“the word grew and prevailed mightily.” Extensive revivals of religion prevailed, the deadness and formalism of the established churches were shaken by the power of a spiritual life—true religion in a remarkable manner was promoted, and branches of the Brentwood church were formed in many neighboring towns.

Dr. Shepherd and Dr. Smith of Haverhill began at this time frequently to visit this place and to preach the gospel in private dwellings—the people listened earnestly and solemnly to the word of life. These men of God and others of a like faith were much encouraged in their labors, and from the year 1770 to 1780, although there was no regularly established society of the Baptists, yet there were frequent meetings held by some of God's ministers of that persuasion. The preaching of these men was eminently simple, lucid and evangelical; arousing the people from the stupid formality and fruitless professions into which a large majority of the estab-

lished churches had fallen, and led to a deep and fixed attention, and an anxious concern for their souls and a preparation of heart for the favor of God. Under such ministrations, owned as they were of the spirit of God, converts were multiplied, churches formed, and the truth of God sounded forth all around.

This spiritual awakening and reformation increased the followers and members of the Baptist faith in the towns of Salisbury, Amesbury and South Hampton, many forsaking the Pedo Baptist churches and societies with which they had been connected, began to hold separate meetings on the Sabbath and other days. These meetings were held first at different private residences of brethren at South Hampton, but soon an increase of members by conversions and a union with brethren in other towns, gave them strength to establish a permanent meeting at the house of Jonathan Clough of Salisbury, about one and a half miles from the village, on the road to Seabrook. This arrangement continued for some years.

The 27th of September, 1780, is memorable as the period when these brethren of Salisbury, Amesbury and South Hampton, then numbering twenty-four, nine males and fifteen females, were organized as a branch of the Brentwood church.

The names of these constituent members were as follows :

EPHRAIM CARTER,
JEREMIAH FLANDERS,
WILLIAM BAGLEY,
JOHN MORSE,
ISAAC MORRILL,
THOMAS FLANDERS,
DAVID CURRIER,
MOSES CHASE,
BARNARD CURRIER,
ABAGAIL CARTER,
MARY FLANDERS,
SARAH RING,

HANNAH WOODMAN,
MARY CHASE,
ABAGAIL MORSE,
HANNAH GOODWIN,
RHODA RING,
SUSANNAH FITTS,
EUNICE GOVE.
ABAGAIL CURRIER,
OLIVE CLOUGH,
ANNA CLOUGH,
MARY BROWN,
MEHITABLE FLANDERS,

These christian disciples acting upon the sure word of promise, set up the banner of truth in the name of Jesus and pledged themselves in the presence of God and entered into covenant with each other to support and maintain the worship of Almighty God and to keep and defend the institutions of the gospel as they had received them. That they might do all things in order and to the edification of the body, they chose one of their number, Moses Chase, as a preacher to improve his gift among them a part of the time. Barnard Currier was chosen to the office of Deacon and David Currier to that of Clerk. Dr. Shepherd, the Pastor of the parent church, was invited to labor with them one fourth of the time for a year, and they obligated themselves for the payment of one-fourth of his support. Some of the descendants of the original constituent members of the church still live among us. Some are worthy members of the church, and that feeble and persecuted band has never been forsaken of the Lord, but by his blessing it has grown into an independent church of strength and usefulness, having been preserved from discord and disunion and blest with frequent and extensive revivals of religion.

While Dr. Shepherd continued to hold the pastoral relation of the Brentwood church and its branches, those brethren in the church possessing rare gifts in the exposition of the scriptures or in understanding of the doctrines of the church, were invited to the work of preaching the gospel as the providence of God might seem to indicate duty. We find, in accordance with this plan, a number of the same church possessing the requisite gifts and encouraged to speak in their public assemblies. The usual form of license given them by the church was that they be invited "to the improvement of their gifts." Hence certain portions of the time were improved by different

members. These men received but little, if any, compensation—supported their families by their secular labors, and yet many of them were studious and faithful in their work of preaching the gospel. Comparatively few of them, however, seem to have ever been inducted into the pastoral office. But while attending to their secular employments for support they were willing to preach when a door of usefulness seemed opened for them. Some of these, however, were possessed of gifts for the work, which the church could not afford to lose, and they were invited to assume the sacred vows of ordination and to be set apart to the Christian ministry. It was also the practice of the church to encourage the greatest degree of freedom in their religious meetings which could consistently be allowed without infringing a proper decorum in divine service, and the orderly conduct of their meetings. Hence we find the practice of laymen speaking at the close of the sermon, and the whole membership encouraged to speak or pray as the spirit might indicate duty. If this spirit was in some instances carried to extremes and apparent confusion followed, it was invariably checked by the more grave and devout, while the spirit of religious freedom—the bonds of christian union and the fellowship of the saints found among them, contrasted most beautifully with the dead formalism, the listless indifference and deathlike want of spirituality found among the churches supported by the State. These brethren, poor, despised and stigmatized as they were, enjoyed much of the presence of the Divine Master in their assemblies. The place of their meeting, though destitute of external attractions, was to them a heavenly place, and the fellowship of kindred minds in their meetings of religious conference, led them oft to sing in the spirit, if not the words of the poet,

•

"Forgotten be each worldly theme
When Christians see each other thus,
We only wish to speak of Him
Who lived and died and reigns for us."

And, my brethren, may it not be a subject of profitable enquiry for us, whether, with our multiplied facilities, and in some respects, better regulated public meetings, we may not have suffered in spiritual freedom and unction.

It is due to the memory of that good man and devoted servant of God, Dr. Samuel Shepherd, that a brief sketch of his official character and labors in the ministry in this place should here be given. Time and space forbid any extended remarks, but as the founder of this Church, his deeds demand of us, at least, a passing tribute of just appreciation. Possessing the advantages of a liberal education, having been trained to the medical profession, of a bold and energetic spirit—decided and prompt in action, of considerable warmth and earnestness as a preacher, tenacious and unwavering in asserting and defending his distinctive denominational sentiments; yet courteous in manners, and free to concede to others their full rights; he was generally beloved and highly esteemed of all who knew him. Though often violently persecuted and his motives assailed, yet few men could wield a mightier influence in this vicinity than Dr. Shepherd. Many live still to attest to his faithfulness and success. Even his bitterest foes were silenced, if they would stop and listen to his pungent exhibitions of truth. A well authenticated incident illustrative of this truth, may be here inserted. A constable, by the name of Eaton, being informed that Dr. Shepherd was to hold a meeting at the house of widow Ring, known among us as the 'Ring house,' made his appearance with a gang of men for the purpose of arresting the minister and breaking up the meeting. Dr. Shepherd

seeing them approach and confident of their intentions, stopped in the midst of his discourse and thus addressed them :—" If you wish to know my authority for preaching the gospel, *here it is*"—holding up the bible in his hand and extending it towards them, "*Here are my credentials,*" and then reading some portions of God's word with solemnity and unction, he resumed his discourse. His adversaries ashamed and silenced, listened and then left him unmolested. This is but one instance illustrative of many. He was annoyed by civil magistrates and the established clergy. But he met it only with a spirit of christian forbearance and kind remonstrance. Among his papers we find a remonstrance sent to a minister settled at North Hampton. It is a plain, christian-like statement of facts, and well illustrates Dr. Shepherd's spirit in dealing with his opposers. I quote a large part of the document, suppressing the names of the leaders in the disgraceful outrage. It was addressed to the Rev. Mr. McClure :

"I was repeatedly requested by John Lamprey, Samuel Moulton, J. Brown and others, living in your Parish, to visit them and preach to them Jesus Christ, but not having an opportunity for some months, at length I was requested to visit them and baptize a number who were in duty bound to answer their consciences, in the manner I believe the scriptures command. Upon that I visited and preached to them peaceably; and finding, upon examination, that they appeared honest, and were really according to what light they had attained, Anti-pedo-Baptists in their principles, I appointed July 15th, 1782, to visit them again, and baptize them if nothing prevented. And we being peaceably assembled, according to appointment, at the house of Mr. Joseph Brown, in North Hampton, while I was engaged in preaching, these men, *

* * * * * all professed members of the church of Christ in North Hampton under your care, as I am informed, did, together with a number of other inhabitants of the Parish, make a forcible entrance into J. Brown's house, aforesaid, where we were worshipping

God, and some of them having forced their way through the assembly to my person, the said ——— assaulted me. I told him to be still and not disturb us in our worship of God, but he said he would not; upon that, finding such a noise was raised that I could not proceed, I addressed myself to them, informing them that their conduct was contrary to the laws of God and the State, but was answered by one, I cannot tell his name, "law or no law, you shall not proceed;" and Mr. ———, with some of his attendants, declared that if I went to baptize them, "~~they~~ would prevent it by force." Nay, they would not suffer me to stay as a private man until the next morning, unless I risked being mobbed and abused. Thus having given you and your church a short account of the men's conduct above named, which can be abundantly proved, I conceive, Sir, that yourself and the body of your church, as men of reason and professed subjects to the laws of Christ, must be sensible that every individual has a natural and inalienable right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, and ought not to be molested or hurt for his so doing, for no equivalent can be given in the room thereof; and, whereas, we have a particular instance recorded in Luke's gospel, 9th chap. 50th verse, where John forbid one casting out devils in Christ's name, because he did not follow them, Jesus said unto them, "*Forbid him not;*" from which I conclude that neither you or I have a right, as christians, to forbid any other christians of whatever denomination, that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, to worship in Christ's name, especially by force and arms or threatening words.— It is contrary to every precept of the laws of Christ and repugnant to the spirit of the gospel. I pray you, sir, to read to your brethren, Rom. 12th chap., and especially notice the apostolic precepts, from the 18th verse to the end of said chap.; and then judge if the conduct of your brethren before named is not worthy of admonition unless they repent and confess and forsake.

All I request in behalf of myself and brethren, that dwell in your parish is, that they may have the liberty of enjoying the gifts of their brethren in the ministry occasionally, and having the ordinances administered among them, without being put in fear by threatenings of the loss of property or lives or limbs, &c., even by the professed members of the same Lord Jesus, before whose judgment seat we must all appear in a short time to give up our account.

If, therefore, the afore-named brethren of your church will give satisfaction that they will not do so any more, nor aid or assist others in so doing, it is all we request. But if they refuse, we expect you will admonish them, and if you do not it will evidently appear, that although their conduct before related is contrary to all the laws of Christ, that you uphold them in so doing, and we must look to God and the civil powers for relief."

These remonstrances, however, availed nothing in allaying the spirit of persecution. The "sect" to which he belonged "was everywhere spoken against," and he as a leader, must bear the reproach of his denomination. These defences and statements of facts live in history to indicate the spirit of Dr. Shepherd, even towards his bitterest opposers. He joyfully suffered with his brethren for those principles so dear to his heart, and lived and died beloved by his own people. His name is cherished in all the churches among which he went preaching the gospel of the kingdom. The names of the good "shall be held in lasting remembrance."

It is highly creditable to this newly constituted body of christians, that among the very first acts which they felt that duty demanded of them was to make provision for the poor and needy saints. And in that small band of disciples was found some who were poor in worldly goods but rich in faith and ornaments to the church.

November 7th, 1781, we find a record as follows:—"Agreed to contribute a little money as a stock for needy brethren and sisters, and that Dea. Barnard Currier be entrusted with the same." On the following month that all reluctance might be removed from the minds of those who deserved their aid, they passed the following:—"Agreed that if any brother or sister is needy, he or she that is needy, be desired with freedom to ask the church to relieve them." These records are

illustrative of the common and I believe universal practice of the denomination. They believe it to be a sacred religious obligation resting upon them, to aid, according to their ability, in supporting the sick and needy among them.

The law of the State at this time barely *tolerated* the existence of other religious bodies aside from those it had established. Persons having a certificate from the minister and other leading members known as belonging to other religious bodies, stating that the bearer did worship with them and help support the gospel among them, might be released from the obligation of paying taxes for the support of the parish minister. Hence, we find recorded, with names attached, the following declaration :—

“ We, the subscribers, being sensible that every religious society must be at charges to support the ministry of the word and many other expenses arising from time to time to discharge the duties of a religious community, and whereas the law of the land gives liberty of conscience and a right to join and attend with whatever religious society we please ; we, being conscious that the Anti-Pedo Baptist Churches are most in accordance to Scripture in their principles and way of supporting the ministry of the gospel, have applied to the Anti-Pedo Baptist Church, belonging to South Hampton and Salisbury, to join them, and being received by said church as members of said society, we hereby sign their church book to signify our willingness, according to our ability, to assist in supporting their religious cause. Witness our hand, &c.”

This declaration made and their names enrolled on the records, they received a certificate from the proper authorities of the society. We find a form as follows, in the year 1784, prepared by a Committee from the church and society :—

“ We, the subscribers, being chosen a Committee by the Society of the people called Anti-Pedo Baptist, who meet together for religious worship on the Lord's Day in South Hampton, to exhibit a list or lists of persons belonging to said Society or Congregation, do certify that A.

B. and C. D. of Salisbury and inhabitants of the second parish in said town, do frequently and usually when able, attend with us in our meetings for religious worship on the Lord's Day, and we do verily believe are, with respect to the ordinance of baptism, of the same religious sentiments with us.

ELDER SAMUEL SHEPHERD,
DEA. BARNARD CURRIER,
JEREMIAH FLANDERS, } Committee.

The meetings for religious worship were constantly maintained, though changed from place to place in the private dwellings of the brethren. The church increased slowly and cases of discipline occurred, yet the brethren held on in their integrity, though annoyed by petty, lawless persecutions and frequent acts of violence from the officers of the parishes and the irreligious part of the community.

On the 30th of April, 1783, Dea. Barnard Currier was approbated to preach the gospel and at the same meeting delegates were appointed to attend a council to be held in Canaan, N. H., and to assist in ordaining, if they should deem it advisable, Thomas Baldwin as Pastor of that church. This was the Thomas Baldwin, afterwards so distinguished as a divine and a preacher in Boston and whose praise is in all the churches of our land.

From the scanty records kept by the church and from other sources still open to us, we gather the fact that the church continued to hold its strength and gradually to gain some by additions, though its members remained comparatively small and the people were much scattered. Subscriptions were every year renewed, a part of Dr. Shepherd's salary was paid by these brethren and something given to defray the traveling expenses of those ministers who, in the providence of God, visited and preached unto them the gospel of the kingdom.

The amount usually raised for the support of the gospel was about one hundred dollars annually. Which sum, though not large, was sufficient to defray their expenses and was generous for the limited means they possessed. Their number, it should be remembered, was at this time but small. The pecuniary circumstances of many among them were exceedingly straightened, while some doubtless erred in carrying too far their prejudices against the payment of a stipulated sum for the support of the ministry. Ministers and churches of the denomination protested against the abuses imposed upon the people by the established churches. Fixed salaries were recognized by law and the people compelled to pay for the support of a ministry which in many instances gave unmistakable evidence of a want both of grace and of humanity. Hence their decided testimony against what they deemed an hireling ministry.

We have referred to the act of the church at its first regular business meeting in choosing Moses Chase, one of the constituent members of the church, to exercise in their public assemblies the gift which the Holy Spirit had committed to him for expounding to the people the word of God, and for the edification and growth of the society in the knowledge of God. This call was not to the charge of the church at this time—not to ordination and the exclusive work of the ministry—but it was simply a license from his brethren to preach, and an invitation for him to use the gift within him among them as might be convenient. This license was given him on the 27th of September, 1780. He was afterwards invited to receive ordination, and the solemn services of that interesting occasion were held at Brentwood on the 2nd day of December, 1789. As he was employed a part of the time as a stated supply to this

church and administered the ordinances of God's house, we may regard Mr. Chase as the first Pastor of this Branch Church.

Elder Moses Chase, for that was the title he bore among the people, was born, August 20, 1736—licensed as a minister of the gospel, Sept. 27, 1780, and was ordained 2nd of Dec. 1789. He continued his ministry in this place and in neighboring towns until near the time of his death, which event occurred at his residence at Amesbury Ferry, Feb. 5th, 1797, aged 59 years. His funeral was attended by Dr. Hezekiah Smith of Haverhill. Elder Chase shared largely in the confidence of his brethren, and died beloved and lamented far beyond the bounds of his own denomination.

Though destitute of the advantages of an early liberal education, yet he was not uneducated in spiritual things. He was a wise and prudent counsellor, an earnest preacher, and a useful minister. His life is reported as of a most exemplary character, which secured for him the esteem of even those who were bitter opposers of his sentiments. We find him laboring in connection with Elders Hovey, Eastman and others, until he was discharged from his service on earth and entered on his reward among the faithful in heaven.

Of Mr. Chase's descendants, many remain among us highly respected in the community, honored for their moral integrity and worth. Some of them live to labor and pray in connection with the same church of which he was the first pastor, while others hold honorable relations in other communions. Thus instead of the fathers we have the children of the third and fourth generation of them that fear God and keep his commandments.

The subject of becoming a separate, independent church

frequently occupied the minds of the brethren, but met with a decided opposition from brethren in some sections of the church. In 1793, March 13th, the question came up, by appointment for discussion, but owing to a disagreement on the part of brethren in the upper part of South Hampton and Kingston, it was finally dropped, and the brethren, though acting virtually as an independent body, yet continued to retain their standing as a branch of the church at Brentwood.

On the 16th of May, 1794, Jabez True and Thomas Flanders were elected to the office of deacons in the church. Dea. True was a young man and a young member of the church. Dea. Thomas Flanders was baptized at Brentwood, in 1777, when but a lad of 14 years, some three years before this branch church was formed.

At this meeting the church voted to observe the ordinance of the Lord's supper every month, alternating between South Hampton and Salisbury and to hold a Church Conference Meeting on the afternoon of Friday, preceding the Communion, at 2 o'clock. This Church Conference has been stately observed by the church since that time, a period of sixty-six years. At the same meeting, Barnard Currier, who had been encouraged to improve his gifts in the church, some years before, was appointed as one of its preachers, with special reference to his laboring in South Hampton and Kingston.

From this date on to the close of the century we find only the spirit of peace, of enlarged fellowship and the evidences of the good hand of God being upon the people. The word of the Lord grew and steadily prevailed; the Lord adding unto his church such as should be saved. Honorable mention is made in the church records of those venerable men of God, whose labors in the ministry, whose self-sacrificing toils and

sufferings for Christ, and whose godly lives have secured for them an undying remembrance in many hearts and a noble reward from a faithful God.

Elder John Peak, N. Hooper, and others of a like spirit, visited and much encouraged this people. Their visits were ever highly pleasing to the saints and profitable to the cause of the Redeemer.

On a review of the church's history thus far, we are at a loss to ascertain what in their principles, their doctrines, their regular and devoted lives, or their influence in the community, could have excited so much hostility and ill-will against them. They were men of peaceful lives, farmers, mechanics and others representing the middling interests of society. Yet their names seem "to have created a general alarm, and the apprehension of their existence and toleration, was enough to unsheath the sword of persecution and to arouse a relentless opposition." Yet they ever advocated only the principles of the Prince of Peace. They steadily disclaimed the doctrine that "the civil sword should be wielded by the magistracy in professed defence of religion." Asserted that "the state church was not always identical with the true church—that all force applied to religion tends to neutralize its whole character, which must consist in a voluntary surrender of the soul unto God,"—hence that "every man in matters of religion must be left free to hold, believe and act, according to his convictions of duty, without being restrained or constrained by the interference of the civil power or the proscriptions or prosecutions of any man or body of men."

In advocating the true and only scriptural administration of the christian initiatory rite of baptism, the Baptists were accused of making it an essential of salvation; of exalting an

institution of the church, a form and seal, into an indispensable requisite of admission into the kingdom of heaven. Yet nothing could be more foreign to their solemn convictions of truth or their invariable and united declarations on this point. The doctrine asserted and defended by them everywhere, in public and in private, in preaching and in personal conversation was, that *no baptism was valid but that which was the profession of an antecedent faith*—that unless saving faith was first experienced, baptism was neither required nor acceptable in God's sight and could not be justifiably administered in the christian church. So far did they disavow and condemn the idea of baptismal regeneration, or the exalting of a ceremony into a cardinal doctrine of faith, that they declared their firm belief that “no distinction could be made in the eyes of Almighty Justice between the infant of a christian or an unbeliever,” and hence they absolutely denied the *validity* of all *involuntary* baptism, and even the administration of the ordinance in its only scriptural form of immersion, unless an evangelical saving faith was first avowed. The rite itself conferred no moral qualities. They believed in “*one Lord*,” the only King and law-giver in Zion, to whom alone they owed and acknowledged implicit obedience. “*One faith*,” personal, spiritual, intelligent,—“*one baptism*,” the baptism of Christ's own institution—to which he himself submitted and set us an example that we should follow his steps,—the only baptism known in the apostolic age and for more than two hundred years after Christ, and has in every age been sacredly observed by a persecuted sect, few in numbers, but loyal to Christ and truth. And to all their opponents and persecutors, their kind christian answer when in sufferings, or when called to a defence of their faith was in substance thus:—“Religion

is a *personal* matter ; its faith is a *personal* faith ; the duties it requires are *personal* duties. Every man is held *personally* responsible to God and not to man for his faith and practice, and hence we cannot allow any man or any body of men, to step in between us and our Maker and control the decisions of our consciences. The realm of conscience is too sacred to be invaded by man." It was in defence of such heaven-conferred doctrines as these, doctrines loved and cherished now by the true christian everywhere, that our honored fathers suffered, and having defended and preserved them inviolate, have bequeathed them unto us, their children, that we may preserve, disseminate and transmit them to those who may come after us. May we be faithful stewards and guardians of so holy a trust.

These are the plain, simple statements of truths now universally received in this land by every protestant communion. And we as a denomination having been blest of God and greatly increased in all that constitutes our real strength, or that contributes to our future advancement and glory,—We, the Baptists of this age, and the church of God in this land of every name, and the entire Protestant world have a large and sacred debt of obligation and acknowledgment to pay, to those honored fathers and mothers of a former age—who suffered with all patient endurance, who prayed in unfaltering faith in God, and hoped in joyous assurance for the coming of that day of religious freedom, which all now so fully and richly enjoy.

Justice to men and principles may be tardy in her advances, yet, she is sure in the bestowment of her rewards at last.

"Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers ;
But Error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies amid her worshippers."

The Baptists can wait their day of just acknowledgment with all confidence. Even now the children of those who persecuted our fathers are bringing their wreaths of honor, and hastening to encircle with praise the names and memories of those who purchased for them as well as us, the rich inheritance of "Religious Freedom." May we, my brethren, while we enjoy greater privileges and vastly superior advantages to our fathers, be ambitious to be more devout towards God and more useful to our fellow men than even they were, for "where much is given, much will be required." We have none of the open persecutions, none of the civil disabilities or the ecclesiastical oppressions of a former age to encounter ; let us then take higher and broader views of the responsibilities and duties of the christian church, and " be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as we know that our labors are not in vain in the Lord."

HISTORICAL DISCOURSES.

II.

“Only fear the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things He hath done for you.”
—1st SAMUEL 11: 24th.

This is the pious exclamation of a devout heart. Is there not enough, my hearers, in the personal history of each one of us to call forth expressions of humble gratitude unto the Lord? Do not the great things He has done for us, his manifold blessings, his rich and abounding mercies, demand that we serve him in truth and with all our hearts? God's service is the life of the soul. The exalted privilege and imperative duty of every intelligent being. And it is the consciousness that we have fulfilled these obligations and have pleased God, that makes life's reviews seasons of sacred pleasure, and calm, hallowed enjoyment to our souls, while the consciousness of violating our moral obligations to our Maker and sinning against his commands, makes every retrospect of the past painful and saddening. Hence the propriety and importance of the injunction of the prophet in our text, “Only fear the Lord and serve him in truth, with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you.” And this review is not only

profitable to the individual but also to the church—God's care of her—his defence and protection afforded, and the gracious manifestations of his providential dealings toward her, give ample encouragement and should excite all the friends of the church to renewed and untiring service.

The brief sketch of the church given in the former discourse closed with the death of Elder Chase. This event rendered the church dependent largely on the services of itinerant ministering brethren for the administration of the ordinances among them as well as for preaching on the Sabbath. Dr. Shepherd, however, as the pastor of the parent church, and hence of all its branches, continued to visit them occasionally, and especially on seasons of baptism, when the Lord's Supper was also administered. We find records also of the visits of Elders Ambros and John Peak. In case of a failure in the supply by a regularly ordained minister, the brethren in the church who had been licensed to preach were called upon to officiate in the public ministration of the word, which they did with much acceptance. The place of meeting was also removed from the house of Mr. Clough to a building at the Corner, nearly opposite Amos Morrill's house. This was but a small, inconvenient building, illy fitted for divine service, without carpeted aisles or cushioned seats or benches, but one within their means of hiring. At a small expense they prepared this rude, simple building with a stand for the minister, and elevated seats for the singers. This was cold and uncomfortable at the season of the year when the weather was severe and they were without any facilities of warming the house, yet they here worshipped God—enlarged the numbers of their congregations and found the place to them, often "the house of God and the gate of heaven." Many pious waiting Sim-

son's and Anna's found this a hallowed place to their souls. Here was God's feast of love,—the King himself spread for them the table and they supped with him and he with them. It was the true love-feast of kindred minds—the antepast of a higher and holier communion of saints in heaven. True, no gems of choice lustre or gold bedecked the humble garb of these simple-hearted worshippers—no beauteous forms of the plastic art hung in wreathed garlands or graceful festoons from the rude walls of their place of worship, nor did the graceful spire point above to that home of the soul and temple of eternal praise for which they were preparing by their sincere acts of worship. With these they could well dispense—they needed no wealth of equipage, no artificial aids, no outward attractions to supplement their faith, or to give effect to the obedient and the reverent devotions of their hearts. They sought and found the God that answers prayer and they returned refreshed and their spiritual strength renewed, from their uncomfortable time-worn and unattractive place of worship. “God is a spirit, and *seeketh* such to worship him as worship *in spirit and in truth.*” Devout, soul worship, is independent of all exterior forms or conditions. *We believe and live.* The expression of that inward life is dependent upon no human aids—no conventional forms. True, these may help the expression of our devotional acts, and may conduce to the desirable comfort of true worshippers, but they are not the spirit and life of religion. Hence from the rudest and most undesirable places of worship, the humble saint has returned saying, “We have walked with God to-day”—while many have gone from their costly temples after a season of listless, sleepy, and unprofitable worship, feeling that the service of God was a “weariness,” and the Sabbath the most unwelcome of all the days of the week.

Soon after the death of Elder Chase, whose life closed near the end of the century, Dea. Jabez True was invited; by a vote of the church, to improve his gift in preaching among them. In the year 1801, we find him first recognized as a licensed preacher, and commencing among this people those valuable services, which for so many years, he rendered to the church and the cause of Christ in this town and the towns adjoining. The operations of the Divine Spirit were most palpably manifest in leading and directing him in reference to the beginning of his public ministry.

While at work in his field, the spirit led his mind to meditate upon the 55th chap. of Isaiah, 1st verse. A whole sermon at once opened to his mind from these words, and the impression became fixed in his mind that it was his duty to preach the gospel. He preached his first sermon from these words, in the meeting house then occupied by the church. For the years 1801 and 1802, thirty dollars compensation per annum was voted him for services. In 1803, eighty dollars, and in 1804 all the money raised, and he was received as a stated supply, and invited to admit into the pulpit and exchange with such as he saw fit. We find also the following record, illustrative of the attachment of the brethren to him and the high estimation in which his talents were held :

Voted, That Dea. Jabez True continue with us and improve his gift in the church and society according to his ability, and we wish him to examine his own feelings, as it respects his duty to God and to the church of Christ in reference to being ordained.

To this communication of the church, Dea. True replied after a suitable time for prayer and deliberate consideration had elapsed, declining to be considered a candidate for ordination. In reaching this decision we may feel assured that he acted from a sense of unworthiness to assume the high and

sacred responsibilities of the position of one ordained to the great work of preaching the gospel, and from a sense of his own inadequacy to the pastoral relation which his brethren were desirous he should assume.

The communion seasons of the church had become irregular and much difficulty was experienced in obtaining an ordained minister to administer the ordinances for the church. Dr. Shepherd began to be advanced in years, yet visited them occasionally to baptize those who had applied for admission to the church, and to administer the communion of the Lord's Supper. Elders Ambros, Robinson, Peak and Lovell, also visited them occasionally. These men were honored in the churches for their true piety, their zeal for God and their sufferings and trials endured for their peculiar, distinctive sentiments. Meetings for conference and business were frequently held in this village, generally at this time at the house of David Currier. These seasons were oftentimes of great spiritual refreshing to their souls. They loved each other as the disciples of Jesus Christ, they loved the church and her institutions, and their sufferings for the defence of a common faith created in them a common and endeared sympathy for each other. They were marked and despised by the world around them, but they clung the more closely to each other, and could say with all sincerity and truth,

“ Before our Father's throne
 We pour our ardent prayers ;
 Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
 Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes,
 Our mutual burdens bear ;
 And often for each other flows
 'The sympathizing tear.”

These sentiments were not mere poetical rhapsodies—not overstrained licenses of an enthusiastic faith, but their oneness of interests, sympathies and sufferings made them one in heart. They loved as saints—they were not faultless, but they were christians and charitable to each other's faults.

In 1806, we find the name of one acting on committee as a member of the society, who from that day to this has sustained an honorable and efficient relation to this society. I refer to Thomas Boardman—a name identified with this religious interest before there was any organized society—as was his father before him, so in turn was the son entrusted with offices of trust and confidence. This is the only name handed down to us which we recognize, dating back as far in the remote past, as the above period of more than fifty-four years. A few years later, as we shall see in our annals, the names of others still living will appear. But alas, how few of the fathers and mothers of earlier times yet linger among us, and how rapidly the number is growing less.

Dea. True continued his labors in the work of the ministry, securing constantly and in all the circuits of his preaching the respect and affections of the people. He visited and preached in neighboring towns, and found in the good providence of God an open door before him that he might preach unto the people the word of life. His heart was evidently in the great work, and the people were desirous to hear. In 1804 we find in his Journal the records of his preaching in Newburyport (Newbury Joppa.) His first sermon there was preached from these beautiful words of Isaiah, 42nd, 11th,—“Let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains.” The church in Newburyport was organized in 1805, and Elder John Peak was their first pastor.

The years 1810, 1811 and 1812, Elder Chesswell preached to the church a portion of the time, and Dea. True on those Sabbaths preached in the vicinity. The meetings for conference and prayer, church meetings and funerals, were usually attended by him, and he was the regular supply for a large part of the time.

At a meeting of the church held by appointment on the 7th of March, 1811, Dea. Thomas Flanders, Benjamin Currier, John Morrill, David Currier, and Joseph Flanders, in connection with Dea. True, were appointed a committee to draw up a petition for an act of incorporation. The petitioners asked to be recognized as the First Baptist Society of Salisbury. A copy of the original petition is still in the hands of the society, and is appended to these papers. (See note A.) It was signed on the 16th of May. Of the forty-six original signers, I believe but four are found among the living, the others have finished their course on earth and gone to the Great Lawgiver and final Judge of all.

The prayer of the petitioners having been granted, a warrant was applied for to Jacob Brown, Esq., Justice of Peace, that the petitioners might proceed legally to the choice of officers and become organized as a religious society. We have placed in our notes this application for the warrant and the subsequent action thereon. (See note B.)

This society in accordance with the warrant issued was organized on the 26th of August, 1812.

At their first meeting held on the 2nd of October, 1812, the society expressed a desire that Dea. True should receive ordination and become their pastor. A committee of four was chosen to communicate the wishes of the society to Mr. True, and also to visit the Parent Church at Brentwood in company

with Dea. True, and consult with them upon the subject. This conference of the society's committee with the Brentwood church and with Dea. True resulted in the call of an Ecclesiastical Council from the neighboring churches, to advise with them upon the subject of his ordination, and if in their judgment such a measure was deemed expedient, to make the necessary arrangements for his ordination to the sacred work of the gospel ministry. The result of this council was the ordination of Elder True to the work of the ministry, and as the pastor of this church and society on the 5th of November, 1812. We have not the account of these ordination services on the records. Elder True had preached as a licentiate of the church for twelve years, and spent a large part of his time in preaching for this church, of which he was the second pastor, and continued the relation until 1822.

Elder True was born in Salisbury in the East Parish, January 23d, 1764. From his infancy his mother selected him for the work of the ministry, and desired to have him educated for that work, but her death defeated her plans. He was, however, possessed of a good common education for the times, and a diligent and earnest student of the bible, and is reported to have read it through *thirteen times* in course, before he arrived at the age of twenty years. This gave him at this early age a good biblical knowledge. He was a teacher of music and taught a singing school at the Mills village, where he was brought under the faithful preaching of Elder Chase. Here his attention was arrested by the truths he heard—religious impressions followed him to his home, and soon after he was converted to God, and when about thirty years of age was baptized by Elder Chase and united with the Baptist church, Salisbury Mills.

The father of Elder True was warmly attached to the Congregationalists, and none of his children could be guilty of an act more repugnant to his feelings than that of uniting with the Baptist church. The first act of the father, who was a large land-holder in the town, was to disinherit his son for joining the Baptists. The next year, however, the feelings and spirit of the father became happily changed. He heard the Baptists preach and became convinced that he had been wrongfully prejudiced against them, that they were sound in doctrine and a substantial people, and he received his son back again to his farm and service. He was afterwards unmolested at home in his religious opinions. We have seen the estimation in which he was held by his brethren, and his ardent and abundant labors in the ministry. That he ministered to this church for the space of more than twenty years, a part or all of the time, is a high testimony to his piety and ability as a minister of Jesus Christ. His salary being small, his support was largely dependent on his farm, and his daily toils were demanded for the support of his family. Nevertheless, he never neglected the gift that was in him when the call of duty demanded him to labor in the Master's service. Two reasons for a long time held him back from assuming the vows of ordination; the one, the fact that he had not received like many others a liberal education, and the other that his daily labors demanded too much of his time to permit him to do as much as he wished in the work of the ministry. His life, however, both before and after he became pastor of the church was one of prudence, exemplary piety, and a consecrated purpose of doing good. The church gradually increased in numbers and strength under his ministry, and his labors were owned to the edification of the saints and the conversion of sinners to Christ.

Harmless and inoffensive, however, as was the life of Elder True, he did not escape persecution. He belonged to a "sect everywhere spoken against."

Being requested to go to Hampton, to attend a funeral at the house of Mr. Joshua Lane, a farmer of considerable distinction, he met with violent persecution. A riotous proceeding had occurred a little before this in a field where the Baptists were holding divine service. The design of the "Parish religion people," as they were called, was to drive the Baptists from the field. The rioters rushed upon them, firing guns, pulling up vegetables and throwing at them, overthrowing the stand upon which the preacher stood, and finally broke up the meeting. Mr. Lane, shortly afterward, having lost a son whom all loved and respected, and being dissatisfied with the conduct of the ecclesiastical leaders of the parish in reference to the affair above named, sent for Elder True to attend the funeral of his son and preach a sermon. When he had come within about two and a half miles of the place, a noted man, called adjutant Dow, met him with a tithing-man's pole, denoting authority, and advised him to go back. Mr. Dow professed great respect for Elder True's father and relatives, and exhorted him with plausible words to immediately return and not bring scandal upon his family friends. He further informed him that he would not be permitted to go on, as they had tar and feathers prepared for him if he did persist. Elder True replied that he was on his Master's business and should go forward. Mr. Dow then sought to bribe him by promising to give him "a heifer and five sheep." Failing in this, he stood with his pole drawn in an attitude threatening to injure him. Elder True told him not to strike him for he was on his Master's business, and at the same moment giving the word of command to his

horse, escaped uninjured. Arriving at Hampton he found the house crowded. Two clergymen of the established order, Rev. Mr. R. and Rev. Mr. W. sat directly before him to note his sermon, and looking him steadily in the face, sought to embarrass him in speaking. The preacher, however, soon became engaged in his sermon, lost all embarrassment from the presence of the parish clergymen, and they, unable to write as fast as he preached, put up their pens and became mute listeners to the remainder of the sermon.

Another petty persecution he endured on account of being taxed by the East Parish for the support of their minister. He had frequently preached for the society before this and the tax being levied against one known to belong to another denomination and an accredited minister in that denomination, was most manifestly unjust and contrary to the spirit of the law. Besides this, it was an aggravation of this unjust persecution, that this same society had so far recognized Mr. True's ministerial character as to receive from him gratuitous official services. He had preached for them up to that date, eleven Sabbaths, two Fast Days and one Thanksgiving day, and attended twenty-six funerals. Hence he refused to pay this unlawful tax on the ground of his connection with another christian denomination and the unjust nature of the demand. The officer then seized his cow and sold her at public auction and after deducting the amount of the tax and the expenses incurred by the sale, returned him the remainder of the money. (See note C.) The tax was renewed the next year, but upon his peremptorily refusing to pay it, was withdrawn. These instances show the spirit of the times and let us into the history of the trials and sufferings which these godly men were called upon to endure for conscience sake. Yet they

conferred not with flesh and blood—God was with them, and their hearts were constantly cheered by witnessing the evidences of his gracious power and the cheering seals of the Divine approbation upon their labors. They were laborers together with God and he gave them success.

The spirit of persecution against all who differed from the dominant church was the spirit of the times and the age. Toleration was not the doctrine or the practice of the Puritans, as their history most unequivocally proves. Escaping from the persecutions of the old world that they might enjoy freedom to worship God for themselves, they soon rivalled the old persecuting hierarchy from which they had fled, and seemed determined to outdo her in the supremacy with which they maintained their religious establishment, and the unholy severity which they exercised towards all who differed from them.

It has been objected to the Baptists that they were schismatics, making divisions in the churches and disturbing the peace and tranquility of neighborhoods and settled parishes. That truth should disturb the tranquil reign of error and arouse men's minds from the morbid stupidity of indifference to a search for truth, and as a consequence, to the calling in question of long established usages and practices is certainly to be expected. And if breaking up the dead formalism of lifeless churches—if infusing a new spiritual element into torpid and slumbering ecclesiastical bodies—if the assertion of great and fundamental truths, and the vindicating of gospel principles, denied and trampled upon all over the State and the land, if these things disturbed the quiet of communities and the peace of established churches, then must the Baptists, like their Divine Master and his Apostles—like the true witnessing gospel church of every age, plead guilty to the charge.

The Baptists ever appealed to the bible, independent of all human tradition, and by the bible alone wished to have their doctrines tried and their practice approved or condemned. They did not believe in the union of Church and State, and ever protested against it. They advocated the doctrine of a freedom of conscience to all men, whatever their belief, making them accountable not to man but to God alone for their belief. They rejected all forms of administering the ordinance of baptism, except immersion, as unscriptural, and infant baptism, because it is the act of a parent or sponsor for the child without the knowledge or consent of the child, and consequently not an intelligent act, resting on the *personal* knowledge or faith of the child, and hence is a direct interference with the freedom and subsequent choice of the child if converted and wishing to make a public profession of faith before the world. Theirs was the spirit and the song of the Huguenots—

“ Our hearths we abandon,
Our lands we resign;
But, Father, we kneel
At no altar but thine.”

It was not, as it is frequently asserted, a question merely of the use of much or little water in baptism, but it was the *vital* question of *a literal, personal obedience to their Lord and Master*. “In the word of God they found simple, intelligent statements of truth—they believed that the word of God was the only authority in matters of faith and practice,—that Christ was king in Zion, reigning over voluntary subjects by laws of his own ordination; that the Apostles and Evangelists at the command of Christ went everywhere preaching the word, addressing to the hearts and consciences of intelligent and responsible men and women the claims of the Divine law, the necessity of a personal faith, and that all who by faith received

Christ should profess him before the world by a *voluntary* baptism, and that true gospel churches were composed of men and women so converted and so baptized." Hence, they deemed it "*a thing impossible to make christians of unconscious infants,*" and declared it corrupting to the churches, which should be separate from the world, to have unconverted persons received into them. Justification they believed to be by a personal faith, baptism a voluntary intelligent act, and religious services accepted only as it was free. They protested against coercion in religion, State churches, infant baptism, and all persecutions for religious opinions.

Faith, said our fathers, is the gift of God. Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God, hence all acceptable service is free, the voluntary offering of an intelligent mind. Force and coercion of every kind they contended were inadmissible in the church, inasmuch as religion is an affair between man and his God, men may voluntarily embrace it, but can never be forced to become christians. Hence, unconscious infants must be denied admittance to the church, because reason and scripture unite in refusing to recognize the unintelligent infant as possessed of that faith which can only follow hearing and understanding the word of God.

Hence we find the church as at its earliest date, so ever after, enduring trials for the defence of their principles and contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. They knew that truths of the largest magnitude were often of the slowest growth. That time with his effacing hand must wipe off many prejudices and pre-conceived opinions from men's minds before the claims of truth would be seen. They hence in patience possessed their souls, remembering that ultimate victories are always on the side of truth.

Their creed, copies of which we now possess, was made solely from the bible, and would do honor to any church of the present day. In their preaching they clearly and with much power presented and defended the lost condition of man by nature—his entire sinfulness and condemnation—the holiness and spirituality of the Divine law—the imperative duty of all to obey its just and holy requirements,—the absolute necessity of the new birth or regeneration—the duty of all men immediately to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ—the indispensable necessity of the efficacious and free influences of the Holy Spirit as the efficient power in the soul's conversion—the sovereignty of God in the calling, converting and saving of souls—the complete justification of all true believers by faith through the righteousness of Christ—the perseverance of the saints through grace to final glory; and the final and eternal separation of the righteous and the wicked at the day of judgment, and an eternal state of happiness or of misery to follow according to the personal character which each individual shall be found to possess when they shall give up their account to God, the judge of all. These were then and have ever been the cardinal doctrines of the denomination.

The position assumed by the established churches was that of a supreme ecclesiastical dictation—a sovereignty in Church and State. They threw abroad the banner of imperial power. Their parishes and their churches were territorial, marked and defined by the laws of the State, and thus taking possession of the whole State, claimed over every inch of its territory an exclusive jurisdiction. Each parish thus settled by law in its bounds, claimed the obedience and spiritual dominion over each soul born within its limits. The heaven-conferred principles of man's inalienable lordship of his own conscience and

freedom of religious opinions, they severely denounced and condemned. Hence that freedom of conscience which all denominations now so happily and freely enjoy, the dearest and most sacred right of all men, was purchased for us as a priceless heritage by an unflinching testimony to the truth and the endurance of a wicked proscription. Yet our denominational fathers asserted and defended these precious principles amid protracted conflicts and with martyr-like sufferings. In carrying out their principles they were compelled to separate themselves from those churches which were established by law, and which were inflicting upon all who dissented from them, fines, imprisonments, tortures and banishment, in order to crush out the principle of religious liberty and to deprive them of a voluntary choice in the solemn profession of religion. A recent writer speaking of the churches in the days of Jonathan Edwards, a hundred years ago, says:

"Seeing the great defection of the churches of New England, in consequence of their alliance with the State, the introduction of the half-way covenant, the lax theology of the churches well nigh spiritually ruined by their worldly views and unconverted ministry, he, i. e. Edwards, formed the great truth of a spiritual church separated from the world, by the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit and the power of a living faith uniting the believing soul to Christ. Everywhere that these doctrines, which were the doctrines asserted and defended by the Baptists, were preached, the number of Baptist churches multiplied rapidly, the spiritually minded and conscientious followers of Christ saw the inconsistency of advocating a spiritual church and a regenerated membership with the baptism of infants, incapable of faith or a knowledge of spiritual truth. And thus in all places where the freshness and vigor of a new spiritual life was found, these Baptist churches multiplied to an unparalleled degree."

It has been urged as a reproach to the denomination that it was opposed both to *ministerial education* and to *stated sal-*

aries of their ministers. Neither of these charges are true of the denomination as a body—it may have been true of individual churches. From the commencement of the Baptist denomination to the present it has been blest with many honored names. Men of the most finished scholarship and of the most generous classical culture, whose influence for piety and learning have been extensively felt in all parts of the land. The Baptists have not on the one hand, repelled from the great work of the ministry, good men, apt to teach and furnishing evidence of a divine call to the sacred office, because of a lack of intellectual culture, nor on the other hand have they failed to see the importance to the ministry of liberal learning. They have not been indifferent to the work of providing the best means in their power for securing those high advantages of a good education. But they did, and still do demand grace before learning, and then learning to the greatest practical extent. They believed and do now believe that God calls into his work men of all ranks, conditions and degrees of mental culture, who possess the greater qualifications of true piety and aptness to teach. Our system requires us to welcome into this service all whom God calls, and then to make all as efficient, as intellectually strong as circumstances will allow. But they never did fellowship to the ministry, men, educated or uneducated, whose piety was of a doubtful character, and whose call to the ministry lacked the evidences of being of the Divine Spirit.

If some of our earlier denominational fathers in the ministry thoroughly studied and understood but *one* book, *that Book was the Bible*—God's own revelation. If in the broad sense of the term they were untaught in classical and literary lore, if scholastic tomes of polite learning had never graced their

libraries, yet they were men of good native talent, earnest thinkers—taught in the school of Christ and owned by the Great Head of the church in winning souls to the truth, and extending the bounds and triumphs of the church.

The objection made against them, that they were *opposed to stated salaries*, rests upon a misconception of their circumstances and their times. They paid often specified salaries, though not always. They had suffered so severely from the unjust taxes imposed upon them to sustain men in “holy orders,” whose piety they seriously doubted; their property had been seized and sold to pay these “salaried men,” whose ministry they did not attend, and whose overbearing and unchristian spirit armed against them the civil power, so that it is by no means strange that they chose what they esteemed a more voluntary method of meeting the wants of their ministers. They did make provision for those who labored among them in the gospel and they recognized the doing of this, according to their ability, as a principle of Christian obligation as the history of this and other churches amply proves. They believed in a voluntary and not a compulsory method of raising monies for the support of the gospel. They denied the right of government to tax and enforce by law the collection of stated salaries, but they believed in supporting those who labored among them, and their subscriptions, though to us they may appear small, yet were, in fact, often generous. The ministry was itinerant and secularized by daily toils, the people were scattered and their means straightened, strong prejudices also existed among the people against any stated amount of support. Yet everywhere the ministers found a home in the houses and the hearts of the brethren, and many generous and timely presents were transferred from the larder of the hostess to the needy preacher’s

wagon. The period of the church's history which we have passed in review before us thus far, had been a period of depression, of persecution and suffering for principles. Its members understood thoroughly all the points in controversy between them and their opponents. The doctrines were defined, asserted and discussed with freedom and the church stood on principles well understood and dearly cherished. Hence, though small in numbers and weak in pecuniary strength, they possessed what was better than the strength of numbers or of wealth, an unwavering integrity to principles—an invincible faith in God, and a cheerful endurance of every trial from love to their Savior and the sacred mission entrusted to them. They could suffer and sacrifice for the truth, but they never could betray or abandon it. It is not, however, to be supposed that all who worshipped with them or even connected themselves with the society were really Baptists at heart. Other considerations, doubtless, had an influence, aside from the true principles which they advocated—but the church, as a body, was composed of self-denying and devout men and women laboring for the promotion of the Redeemer's cause.

In the historic facts presented in these discourses, we have been called more fully than we could have wished to the development and statement of the Baptist ideas of the struggling and persecuted fathers and mothers of our Zion. We have endeavored to vindicate them from the false aspersions still lingering in the minds of the few who have never yet deemed this great question worthy of a fair investigation or an honest sifting of evidence; but still held their prejudices against the denomination on the same ground that they do their baptism—the faith of others.

We now approach in the line of history a brighter day, and

our records will become more purely historical, and within the recollection of some among us. The time of the church's enlargement is at hand. God calls forth his people to a broader and more extended mission, and the next discourse will introduce us to the times of enlargement and spiritual prosperity with which the Most High was pleased to visit his people. God is not unmindful of the works of faith and labors of love bestowed by his people from regard to his name. Not a promise of his word shall ever fail, and his people in every age shall bear testimony that "not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord their God spake concerning them."

How glorious and precious, my brethren in Christ, have been the Divine manifestations towards this church! How well her past history illustrates the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God! May we, exalted as we have been by such marked and peculiar providences, prove ourselves worthy to enter into the labors and share the triumphs of those godly and self-denying laborers who have gone before us. May God abundantly bless the rich privileges which we all enjoy to the salvation of the unconverted among us. May all of you who have heard what our God hath done for his Zion—yea, who have witnessed the trophies of his converting power, and perhaps in your own hearts, felt the convictions of his spirit calling you to consider your ways, to repent of your sins and join yourselves to his people—may you come over on the Lord's side. In the language of one of God's ancient, honored servants, we would say "Come thou and go with us and we will do thee good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." This God, shall be our God forever and ever. He shall guide us by his counsel and afterward receive us to glory. "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that

Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant; make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ: to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

HISTORICAL DISCOURSES.

III.

"The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers; let him not leave us, nor forsake us; That he may incline our hearts unto him to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments and statutes and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers."

—1st KINGS, 8: 57, 58.

This devout benediction uttered by Solomon, with loud voice and raised hands, in the presence of the assembled thousands of Israel, immediately after the prayer of dedication of the magnificent Temple of Jerusalem, is indicative of a pious remembrance of all God's favors in the past manifestations of his goodness to their fathers, and of an earnest desire to have the hearts of his people more inclined to the obedience of all God's commandments.

May such be our devout supplication before our Maker. We, like the children of God of old, need the Divine presence, as a constant, abiding spirit and power among us; we need an intimate spiritual communion with God. As he has been with our fathers in all the past, as his spirit went before them and led them into their goodly heritage, so may he be with us. "Let him not leave us, nor forsake us"—for without the blessing of God, his pardoning love and the perfect peace of

the heart that is stayed upon him, we have no real prosperity. May he incline our hearts unto him, that we may walk in all his ways, and keep his commandments and statutes and his judgments." May our minds by his grace be stirred up to do good—to abound in his work, and to obey all his righteous will. With hearts, I trust my brethren, responding to the sentiments of these earnest and pious words of our text, we will this morning resume the history of God's dealings to this church; and with admiration and love, trace in each step of the divine goodness and deliverance, the glowing evidences of God's special favor.

Our fathers engaged in the holy work of building up a gospel church on the pattern of the New Testament. They kept the commandments and the ordinances delivered to them in their sacredness and uncorrupted purity. They faithfully built after the pattern their Divine Master had shown them.

In the foregoing discourses we have completed the history of the church's connection with the parent church at Brentwood. The time had manifestly arrived when its dependence in ecclesiastical affairs, and its subordination, however slight that connexion might be, was no longer desirable or profitable to either party.

Various causes had operated to defer the period of separation, and the establishment of the church upon a permanent and independent basis, until the year 1821. During this long period of more than forty years, the brethren here, and at Brentwood, had enjoyed the most cordial fellowship, and the most endeared communion of saints. The Branch Church was frequently represented by her delegates to the parent church, and a mutual correspondence and sympathy maintained between them.

Dr. Shepherd visited the people here as long as his advanced age and increasing infirmities would allow; ever to the last retaining the honor and cordial affection which his eminent usefulness, his sufferings and labors for Christ entitled him to receive.

The subject of a separation, and the organization of a distinct church, maintaining the same principles and in full fellowship with the sentiments and practices of the Baptist denomination, having been referred to the church at Brentwood, they, in church meeting, May 29th, 1821, passed the following vote:

Voted, To grant the request of the Salisbury Branch, made by their messengers, Elder True and Dea. Thomas Flanders, to dismiss them from us as soon as they shall organize themselves into a church in gospel order.

JONATHAN VEASEY, *Ch. Clerk.*

The church in Salisbury came to a definite action upon this subject on the 14th of September following, when by an unanimous agreement their dissolution from the church at Brentwood, and their organization as an independent church in the Baptist connection were declared. At the same time, and with the same unanimity, the "ARTICLES OF FAITH," adopted by the BOSTON BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, were declared to be in full accordance with their views of the doctrines of Christ, and a petition was drawn up asking for admission into that body as a church in order and fellowship with them. In accordance with that request, this church was received into the Association at its next session, held in Haverhill, Sept. 19. Elder Jabez True and Dea. Thomas Flanders were messengers of the church in attendance. The Fellowship of the Churches was presented to Elder True, the pastor, by the Rev. Dr. Baldwin, the Moderator of the Association. The number of members then connected with the church was 37. The total number of membership from its organization as a branch church

in 1780, to its recognition as an independent church, Sept. 14, 1821, a period of 41 years, was 120. The church having at its separation from the parent church but 13 members more than at its beginning. Of the nearly one hundred additions, during the forty years, some had gone to their rest and reward in glory. Some had been drawn away from their stability in the truths of the gospel and been separated from the fellowship of their brethren, while yet others had united with churches of the same faith nearer to them, and more convenient for their regular attendance on Divine service and the ordinances of the gospel. But the church, tried as she had been in the fires of a severe persecution, deserted as she had been by those whose unstable minds had been tossed and carried away by diverse and strange doctrines, stood forth at this period as a united band, planted together as heirs of the same heavenly hopes and promises—rooted and grounded in the holy faith of the gospel, and prepared for the Great Master's service. Hence it is that we find the church, though still small, yet a vigorous, efficient body, taking broader views of their field of labor, laying firmer foundations, maturing more generous plans of action, and attempting more for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom around them. (For the names of church at times of its re-organization, see Note D.) The same year that the church assumed an independent organization, 1821, the first meeting house was erected. The society in numbers, in ability and social position in the community, had outgrown the uncomfortable and tottering building they had rented, and they felt that the time had come for them to arise and build a house for the Lord. God had given enlargement and prosperity to the congregation—the days of open persecution had ceased, and the favoring providences of God conspired with their con-

victions of obligation to consummate so desirable an object, This house was located on the East side of Back River, so called, and near to the stream; its dimensions were 50 feet in length, by 42 in width, and when completed, was, for the times and the ability of the society, a most convenient and commodious house for the worship of Almighty God. The names of the committee for building the house, were Jonathan Morrill, Amos Morrill, William Morrill and Joseph Boardman.

The services of the dedication, which are still remembered by many of the more aged among us, were of a deeply interesting character, while tears of pious gratitude moistened many eyes. It was a day long prayed for, and to accomplish which the people willingly offered of their substance to the Lord. The people had a mind to work—to give, and to make great sacrifices for the Lord, and now that they had been enabled to build a house for God, and offer it to him for his service and glory, they felt an unspeakable happiness. We regret that the order of services, and the names of those who participated in the delightful exercises have not been preserved.

The labors of Elder True, so long enjoyed, drew near to a close. The demand for laborers in God's spiritual vineyard in the regions around the village became more urgent and imperative. The entire service of one minister must be had at the Mills village, and the adjoining towns and districts needed the time and labors of another. The pastoral relation of Elder True consequently virtually ceased in the early part of 1822, a relation which he honorably and faithfully sustained for more than twenty years. His connection of membership still remained and he still occasionally preached for the church, while they were destitute of a supply, but his time was devoted almost exclusively to labors among the destitute

and needy in the regions around. God was with him, and he was loved and honored in all the region as far as he went preaching the word of life.

In the summer of 1822, Rev. Wm. O. Grant visited this place and preached with much acceptance for a few months. He was not settled as a pastor, but supplied the church half of the time, and preached the other half of the time for a Congregational church at East Salisbury. This arrangement continued, it is believed, about six months. The labors of Mr. Grant were blessed to the awakening of the church and the conversion of sinners. A few were baptized and added to the church. Mr. Grant went to Maine, where it is believed he now resides.

The church being still destitute of a pastor, and without any regular supply, and feeling more than before the increasing demand upon them for the maintenance of the uninterrupted ministrations of the gospel in the enterprising and growing community around them, determined to attempt the support of a pastor and religious teacher, whose entire and undivided services should be devoted to their benefit and the spiritual and moral improvement of the people. A committee was appointed, consisting of Joseph Flanders, Isaac Tuxbury and Moses Morrill, to act for the church, in obtaining a suitable man as a candidate for settlement in the pastoral office among them.

Rev. Dr. Bolles of Salem, a man well known in all the churches, was applied to for advice and assistance in this important step. The time had arrived when the interests of the church and the community demanded a permanent and an educated ministry; a man of ability and experience in the work must be sought out, to take the spiritual oversight of the

flock, and to preach the gospel of the grace of God to the perishing. To meet this great moral want and to enable the church and society to assume an adequate support to such a man, the above committee were instructed by vote of the church to apply to the MASSACHUSETTS BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY for aid, to the amount of one hundred dollars for the ensuing year. This request met a most cordial reception, and a quick response in the affirmative from the Board of that Society, now known as the MASSACHUSETTS BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION.

In the good providence of Him who ordereth all the steps of his trusting people, the Rev. James Barnaby, for some years the honored and loved pastor of the church at Harwich, but then just from New Bedford, called on Rev. Dr. Bolles, and at his advice, came down and preached to this church. A very general expression of approbation on the part of the church and congregation greeted Mr. Barnaby and his preaching. A Committee was appointed to extend a cordial invitation to Rev. Mr. Barnaby to assume the pastorate of the church and settle among them. This was the same committee named above, and the vote of the church, extending this call, was passed July 4th, 1823, and was concurred in by the Society.

This invitation, unanimously given, Mr. Barnaby accepted, and immediately entered upon the duties of his office, and began that arduous and important work, for which his ministry was distinguished, and was made a great blessing. He was the third pastor, settled as such over the church from its first formation.

Mr. Barnaby was a young man, of a liberal education, and had had some years experience in the Christian ministry.

Ardent and energetic in his efforts, and in full sympathy and co-operation with all the great benevolent enterprises of the denomination, he was highly esteemed among his brethren as a good minister of Jesus Christ. The first term of Mr. Barnaby's ministry with the church continued until the Fall of 1825, a period of above two and a half years, when, to the deep regret of the church and society he resigned, having accepted an invitation extended to him from the Baptist church, Deerfield N. H., to become their pastor. This period of Mr. Barnaby's ministry was marked by a good degree of external and internal prosperity and a large increase in the attendance on the word. The church received valuable additions to its numbers and the society was strengthened and considerably increased.

The number of members in the church at this date, October 1st, 1825, was 56.

The church was once more destitute of a pastor. Prayer was made for guidance and aid. The meetings of the sanctuary on the Sabbath and all the weekly meetings of the church were sustained and well attended, even when no recognized minister of the gospel was with them, and what was better than all and above all other considerations, they had the abiding, conscious presence of the Divine spirit manifestly among them, working with power to convert and save. A silent and yet delightful work of grace seems to have been felt, blessing the hearts of saints and bringing a few to an acknowledgement of the power and grace of God bestowed upon them.

After being destitute of the stated labors of a pastor, for more than a year, the Rev. George Evans visited and labored among them in the ministry of the word. On account of ill health, Mr. Evans would not consent to become recognized as

pastor of the church, nor to agree definitely for any length of service. Yet, after eight months, the church voted to request him to act as pastor of the church so long as he should possess health to continue among them, and the hope was also expressed that he might remain and preach the gospel to them. Mr. Evans was most manifestly sent to the people in answer to prayer. He was received as God's messenger by the church and approved as such by his Lord and Master. The year 1827 is a marked one in the history of the church, as a year of God's special presence and power among his people here, as it was in other churches in the Association. The number of additions reported to the Boston Baptist Association held in Charlestown, Sept. 18th, 1827, was 950, and the number of members in this church was 72.

The state of the church, the visit of Mr. Evans, and the results of his labors up to that period are fully stated in the following paper accepted and recorded upon the church records, Feb. 1st., 1828 :

"Towards the close of 1826, when the church met for conference, a spirit of union and brotherly love was witnessed and many of the members had an unusual anxiety for themselves and others. At this time, being destitute of an under-shepherd, earnest prayers were offered, that God would send one who should prove to be a blessing to the church and congregation,

Just as the year expired, God in his providence and most unexpectedly to us, sent Rev. George Evans to visit us. At the opening of the year 1827, hopes were indulged by some that the Lord was about to revive his work. About the last of January a few persons were found, who, for weeks had been in an anxious state of mind. At the season of communion it was proposed by Rev. Mr. Evans, that the members should fix upon some time each day to be devoted to special prayer for the effusion of the Holy Spirit upon us, and the members agreed upon the hour, between 8 and 9 each evening. In February the attention became general in all the religious societies of the place—backsliders were

reclaimed and the church revived. The 15th of this month was the first appointed time for a meeting of religious inquiry and also for a meeting of the young converts. These meetings were beneficial to the inquiring and a special blessing to many others. The month of March was signalized as a season of special power, and between the 18th and 24th of the month more than twenty professed conversion to God. During this season of gracious visitation many of the fathers and mothers in Israel had their youth renewed like the eagles, and when from children, neighbors, and those rejoicing in hope they heard the song of thanksgiving and praise, they were almost ready, like Simeon of old, to say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for I have seen thy salvation." June, July, August and October, are noted as seasons of baptism and as times of peculiar favor to those who had patiently waited and hoped for the salvation of God."

The number which united with this church was twenty-seven by baptism and two by letter, and others were gathered in afterwards. It is the pious record which they have left, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad," and the desire is expressed, that as the kingdom of grace is a kingdom of means, that their prayers may be unceasing—their efforts untiring through this year to bring sinners to the knowledge of the truth, while we rely alone on the sovereign grace of God for success.

Mr. Evans, being unable to perform the labors required in the church on account of impaired health, was obliged to leave the field of his useful labors and seek elsewhere the restoration of his health.

The Divine blessing which was shed forth so abundantly upon all the churches of the Boston Association, and the increase of churches within the bounds of this body—rendered it necessary that a new Association should be formed, that the interests of all the churches might be promoted by leaving more time for the devotional exercises, so essential to the highest benefits of these annual religious gatherings. To effect

this desirable object the church appointed as their delegates, Rev. Mr. Evans and Isaac Tuxbury to meet October 1827, with delegates from sister churches in this section of the State, to organize a new association, by dividing the Boston Baptist Association. This was the commencement of the Salem Baptist Association, the body with which this church is now associated and has ever been since its formation.

The church now numbered more than a hundred members, scattered over a considerable territory. The brethren at South Hampton began to feel that a separate meeting for religious worship and the establishment of a church in their own place would serve to further the great interests of the Redeemer's kingdom. Accordingly they presented a request to this church, signed by seven brethren and sisters, to be dismissed for the purposes of uniting with some others in the formation of a new church, to be located at South Hampton. With this new interest we find the name of Dea. Thomas Flanders, who was baptized and became a member of the Brentwood church before there was any church in this place, and after a membership with this church of fifty years, he now goes out with a new band, to again unfurl the banner of the Lord in another field of labor. This venerable servant of God lived to see the church usefully and successfully laboring in the new field at South Hampton, and died Sept. 8th, 1852, full of years and full of honor. Dea. Flanders was a man of rare natural endowments, a constant and devoted student of the bible, possessed of a remarkably tenacious memory—mighty in the scriptures, and during his connection with this church was possessed of a vast and beneficial influence. Having been baptized in 1777, he had been at the time of his decease a church member for the space of seventy-five years—years of rapid growth

and great enlargement to the denomination. The year following the organization of the church at South Hampton, Elder Jabez True and his wife, at their own request, were dismissed to unite with that church.

The church was destitute of a pastor after Mr. Barnaby's resignation until March 1831, a period of eight or nine months, when they extended an unanimous invitation to Rev. Elijah Foster of Dover, N. H., to become their pastor and spiritual teacher. This invitation, Mr. Foster, after due deliberation accepted, and commenced his pastoral labors during the summer. He was installed as the pastor of this church on the 24th of August, 1831. The services of the Public Recognition, which are reported to have been of a peculiarly solemn and appropriate character, were performed by the following brethren :

Introductory Services—Rev. Mr. Pease, of Newburyport. *Sermon*—by Rev. Mr. Keely, of Haverhill. *Charge*—by Rev. N. W. Williams. *Hand of Fellowship*—Rev. J. N. Brown, of Exeter. *Address to Church and Society*—Rev. J. Aldrich, of Beverly. *Concluding Prayer*—Rev. Samuel Cook, of Brentwood.

After the removal of Dea. Flanders to the church at South Hampton, but one Deacon, Jeremiah Sawyer, was left, and a choice of others to assist in his official duties became necessary. Accordingly on the 5th of November, 1831, after a season of solemn prayer for Divine guidance, the church made choice of Isaac Tuxbury, William Carruthers and Samuel Fielding, to become associated with Dea. Sawyer in the duties of the deaconship.

In December of this year the church revised its "Articles of Faith and its Covenant," retaining substantially its form

and substance, but conforming its language more to the manner of expression now used. These are the articles still adhered to, and in the hands of the church. Several standing resolutions were then also adopted and ordered to be put on record.

The number of church members found on the Records on January 1st, 1832, was 145. In September of that year the meeting of the Salem Baptist Association was held with this church, and was a season of great interest and profit to them. The church reported at this session of the Association, September 26th, 170 members.

We find a steady increase in the membership of the church during Mr. Foster's ministry. The spirit of benevolence is evinced by enlarged contributions for Home and Foreign Missions, the Bible, Tract and Sabbath School cause. Contributions were also taken for the cause of ministerial education, for seamen and the slave, and the holding of slaves as property asserted to be a sin against the principles of Christianity. Brethren George W. Cate and William Douglas, feeling convictions of duty to prepare themselves for the work of the gospel ministry, were encouraged to pursue a course of study with reference to that work.

In the winter and spring of 1834, the Lord visited his people in this place by the special manifestations of his converting spirit. The health of Mr. Foster was rapidly declining, though his spirit was greatly encouraged and his soul rejoiced in seeing God's work of grace going forward with power. Wm. G. Crocker, of Newburyport, a young man, then in the Newton Theological Institution, and afterwards the loved and honored missionary to Africa, labored some weeks among this people and assisted Mr. Foster. Mr. Crocker was greatly owned of God here, and some with whom he labored personally, now

live among us to bless God for his ministry here, and his faithfulness to their souls. We extract Mr. Crooker's account of his visit here :—(See Memoir, Page 55.)

“Went to Amesbury Mills and found that the Lord had begun a good work there. The revival increased and many, I trust, found the Saviour. Here also the Lord was with me, and my soul was cheered from day to day with manifestations of his love.”

On the 3d of August, Mr. Foster, the pastor, having become much reduced in health and strength by a pulmonary complaint, and unable longer to meet the duties of his office as pastor, sent his resignation to the church, desiring its dissolution. This resignation of Mr. Foster was accepted after much consultation, and with great regret, yet as the hope of his restoration to health and to the duties of the ministry again, could not be reasonably entertained, the path of duty seemed plain for them. Beside this, the anxiety of the pastoral relation and the destitution of the people of a proper watch-care and spiritual oversight, led Mr. Foster earnestly to urge upon the brethren the acceptance of his resignation. The end of his useful life was now near, and he calmly awaited the approach of the last messenger to summon him on high, to surrender back, to his ascended Lord and Master the great commission committed to him, to preach unto his fellow-men the gospel of the grace of God. In a little more than three months after the dissolution of his pastoral relation to this church, Mr. Foster passed from his toils and sufferings on earth to the service and the rewards of the heavenly state. On the 29th of September his remains were carried to the Meeting-house, where a deeply interesting discourse was preached by Rev. N. W. Williams of Newburyport, from 2nd Corinthians, 5th, 1-4, “For we know if this earthly house of our tabernacle be

dissolved, we have a building of God, &c." At the conclusion of these solemn services, an afflicted and sorrowing people followed the lifeless form to its final resting place, in the Cemetery at the Corner, where it now remains, marked by the stone erected by his loved people. Beloved in life, his memory is still fragrant, though he sleeps among the dead.

Rev. Elijah Foster was born in Pembroke, in this State, in 1799. At the age of seventeen years his mind became deeply interested in the subject of religion, and having obtained hope in the pardoning mercy of God, he was soon after baptized and received as a member of the church in his native place, by the Rev. Joseph Torrey, his pastor. Having an ardent thirst for knowledge, he pursued a course of education, and graduated with honors at Waterville College in the year 1825. On the completion of his college course, Mr. Foster became Tutor in the college for a short time, but his heart being set upon the great work of the ministry, to which he had consecrated his life, he left the inducements offered by a literary life to become a minister of Jesus Christ.

In the spring of 1829, Mr. Foster began his ministry at Dover, N. H., where his labors were very abundant and his sacrifices for the good of the church very great. In October of that year the house of public worship for which he had so assiduously labored, and the consummation of its erection he had so ardently desired, was completed and dedicated to the service of Almighty God, and the same day he was solemnly set apart by ordination to the work of the christian ministry. On the following Sabbath Mr. Foster baptized the first convert under his ministry, a young man, who, sixteen years after his death was called upon to fill the pastoral office of this church, which was bereft by his early death. That person is now,

1860, the pastor of this church and Mr. Foster's remains sleep among the sainted dead near by.

Mr. Foster, as we have stated, became pastor of this church in 1831, and during a ministry of about three years, saw a large increase in the number and efficiency of this church. He died September 27th, 1834, at the early age of 35 years.

The church, in honor to his useful life, and as a grateful memorial of their affection and esteem, erected a monumental stone at the head of his grave bearing the following inscription :

REV. ELIJAH FOSTER, late pastor of the First Baptist Church of Salisbury and Amesbury—Died September 27th, 1834—
Aged 35 years.

“ Here, Pilgrims pause, and drop a tear or two
O'er the dear relics laid beneath this sod,
A son of sorrow yet he wept for you
And spent his life to win you unto God.”

As a preacher, Mr. Foster possessed talents of a high order. His mind, highly cultivated, was enriched by varied learning and a constant and unremitted diligence in liberal and theological studies. Clear and logical as a reasoner—highly instructive and affectionate in preaching—impressive and solemn in the delivery of his sermons, he was a man of power in his public ministry and in private life. The truth he uttered so manifestly came forth from a sincere and godly heart that it found a response in those that heard him. As a pastor, Mr. Foster was devoted to the good of his people, and his wise and wholesome discipline preserved in the church the spirit of unity and of peace.

A small treatise on Christian Baptism, and another on the Communion question, are left behind him, and are unanswerable pamphlets on those subjects. Of few could it be said with more truth, that he lived beloved by all who knew him, and

died lamented by the entire community of all denominations. He might, with great propriety, have adopted as his own, the language of the poet :

“ Careless, myself a dying man,
Of dying men’s esteem ;
Happy, O God, if thou approve,
Though all besides condemn.”

Rev. Eber Crane, the fifth pastor, was the immediate successor of Mr. Foster. The church having extended to Mr. Crane an invitation to the pastoral office on the 31st of August, before Mr. Foster’s death, he was ordained to the work of the Christian ministry on the 30th of September, the day following the burial of Mr. Foster. The services of ordination were as follows :

Introductory Prayer—Rev. J. N. Brown ; *Reading of Scriptures*—Rev. John Jennings ; *Sermon*—Rev. Baron Stowe ; *Ordaining Prayer*,—Rev. Ebenezer Nelson ; *Charge*—Rev. N. W. Williams ; *Hand of Fellowship*—Rev. James Huckins ; *Address to the Church and Society*—Rev. C. O. Kimball ; *Concluding Prayer*—Rev. Mr. Towne of the Congregational Church in this village.

These services were rendered peculiarly solemn and impressive on account of the recent death of Mr. Foster, and were attended by a large and attentive audience.

Mr. Crane was a graduate of Newton Theological Institution. His connection with this church and society was short, less than a year, when at his request, he was dismissed, May 1st, 1835, and left for another and a distant field of labor.

The subject of American Slavery having engaged the attention of the community, strong resolutions condemnatory of the institution were passed in 1835.

In September, 1836, three young men belonging to the

church, who were engaged in a course of study preparatory to the Christian ministry, received license to preach the gospel. These were William Douglass, now of Providence, R. I., Charles W. Flanders, now of Concord, N. H., and George W. Cate, who died at Barre, this State, after a very short but happy ministry, beloved of the church and honored in the community.

The subject of building a new and larger house for Divine service began to be seriously entertained, and to be the subject of much thoughtful deliberation. The house occupied was too small for the largely increased congregation, and a former enlargement had made its proportions such as to destroy its symmetry if another addition was proposed. The society owned a lot on which their vestry stood, on Market street, which was more central for the accommodation of the people, and more desirable as a location for their contemplated house. The result of their deliberations was to fix upon the location on Market street for the erection of a new and more commodious place of public worship, and a committee was chosen to carry the measure into effect. The house was commenced in 1836, and nearly completed before the end of the year. It was entered for worship in January, 1837.

The church was still destitute of a settled pastor, and the subject of definitely acting on that question had doubtless been somewhat delayed on account of the building a new house. Different individuals had preached to them during the time of their destitution.

In December, 1836, the church and society extended a call to Rev. James F. Wilcox to become their pastor. Mr. Wilcox having signified his acceptance of the invitation, arrangements were made for his ordination in connection with the dedication.

of the new house of worship, then nearly completed. These deeply interesting services occurred on the 25th of January, 1837. The dedication was in the afternoon, and its parts were performed by the following brethren:—Reading of the Scriptures and Prayer, by Rev. Mr. Keeler of the Congregational church in this village; Sermon, by Rev. George B. Ide of Boston; Dedication Prayer, by Rev. Prof. Bacon of Hamilton, N. Y.

The services of the ordination took place in the evening, and were as follows:—Reading of Select Scriptures, by Rev. A. S. Train, of Haverhill; Introductory Prayer, by Rev. B. Wilcox, of Deerfield, N. H.; Sermon, by Rev. Lemuel Porter of Lowell; Ordaining Prayer, by Rev. G. B. Ide of Boston; Charge, by Rev. George Keeley, of Haverhill; Hand of Fellowship, by Rev. J. N. Brown, of Exeter; Address to the Church and Society, by Rev. Mr. Naylor, of Portsmouth; Concluding Prayer, by Rev. Wm. B. Jacobs, of Newburyport. Mr. Wilcox was the sixth pastor of the church.

In these services during the day and evening, the people appeared to be deeply interested. The house was considered then as one of the happiest and most beautiful specimens of that kind of architecture. In size, finish and taste, it reflected honor upon the society, and its entire expense was nobly met by the liberality of the people. Thus was the society again blest and placed in a most promising condition for future usefulness. Possessing a new and elegant house of worship, free from all embarrassment—a pastor of undoubted piety, of an amicable spirit, and with the promise of great usefulness, nothing seemed wanting but the blessing of God to make the union a long and mutually beneficial one. Nor were these indications of good destined to deceive the hopes of God's people—God's hand

was with them, and his blessing attended the word, as the history of the church and society about those times most clearly proves. God did not leave them, nor forsake them, but the days of their enlargement were days of renewed spiritual power and prosperity among them.

The spirit of Christian enterprise and progress in the work of the Lord seems to have marked the pathway of the church, and her members were found ready for every good work. Some young men of unusual promise are found devoting their talents and influence to extend the interests of the church. Those most prominent at that period, have now finished their course on earth and entered on the state of recompense above.

In 1839 the church was called to the endurance of a deep affliction in the removal of Bro. Joseph Flanders from them by death. Their appreciation of the services and sacrifices of this good man is recorded in a fitting memorial of him found on their records, from which we select a few extracts. Mr. Flanders was converted to God in early life, and was baptized by Dr. Sheperd in 1807. In him the church ever found an ardent friend, a devoted son, one of the few who at all times was found bearing the burdens of self-denial and sacrifice for Christ. He ever felt that he had buckled on the Christian armor for life, and that as a faithful soldier he had no resting place on earth. In all his relations in life, as a husband, father, man and christian, he was ever consistent, affectionate and true. Seldom was his place vacant in the public sanctuary or the conference room. The poor, the suffering, the sick and dying, and the inquiring sinner, found in him a friend and a wise counsellor. One of his last injunctions to his family, gathered around his dying bed, was, "Whatever duty bids you give to the cause of God, always give it." An injunction most

sacredly obeyed by those who survived him, and who, though now gone to sleep with their fathers, never in life forgot this church, nor the interests of God's cause in this place. Mr. Flanders died, January 21, 1839, at the age of 69 years.

"Gone to thy rest, dear saint,
The conflict now is o'er;
In triumph thou hast quit the field
To fight again no more."

Under God, Mr. Joseph Flanders was a great blessing to this church, and his name will ever be remembered and cherished as a good man and a faithful, benevolent christian, as long as any live who knew him. The family of Mr. Flanders have nearly all followed him to the world above. One alone of his children, Rev. C. W. Flanders, D. D. of Concord, N. H., a worthy and successful pastor, now survives. But in life and in death, they have been ever the ardent friends of this religious interest. They have loved the spiritual home of their father, they have manifested an interest in the people among whom they spent their earliest days, and the memories of the departed are fondly cherished by all among us who knew them.

The church in her progress is still rejoicing in the signal favors of the Most High. The society is large and prosperous. As the church increases in her numbers we observe an increase in the spirit of liberality, in the amount contributed for the benevolent objects to which they gave encouragement. Resolutions were passed also expressive of sympathy and assistance for the leading denominational enterprises and for the objects of humanity and charity which appeared to them deserving of their prayers and co-operation as a church.

The year 1842 was a year of great and extensive revivals of religion through this land. The churches in Massachusetts

and throughout New England were greatly enlarged in numbers, and built up in strength and harmony. This year was marked as the most auspicious year ever, up to that date, witnessed by this church, as a rich season of the outpouring of the spirit of God, and the conversion of sinners. In many instances business was suspended entirely, and in others partially so for a season, to attend to the higher and more important interests of the soul. Meetings were held day and evening for a long period of time, and the whole place seemed pervaded by the presence of the power of God. This house of worship become the place of special manifestations of the converting spirit, and all denominations came together in one place, of one accord, for prayer and the worship of Almighty God. Some were arrested by the abounding grace of God, and their attention called to the subject of their spiritual welfare while at their daily employments. Scoffers were silenced, unbelievers convinced, and the inquiring found peace, through the atoning blood of the Son of God. This sanctuary was the place of solemn prayer, of anxious inquiry, and the spiritual birth-place of many souls. This has been called the great revival, and if the history of revivals in the church up to that time is considered—if the influence, the social and moral position of those converted, and since laboring in the church is considered, or if the permanent effects on the community is taken into the account, it may well be denominated the GREAT Revival of this church. The church reported that year an addition of forty members by baptism, and a total membership of 245. Many among us can testify to the power of God on their own souls, and many who have never made a profession of their faith in Christ, did then begin to think, to weep and to pray. May they not be left to grieve the spirit of God

and to perish in their ways of disobedience to God and the convictions of duty.

Such seasons of grace pass not away, without vastly augmenting the responsibilities of all classes. Saints are solemnly held to a higher standard of faith, of holy living, and godly, consistent action in the cause of the Redeemer. Sinners, unconverted men and women, ever after live under a greatly increased responsibility by continuance in a state of sinful indifference and neglect, by the aggravation to their guilt, of an increased amount of light and a conviction of truth, never before felt. May none of you, hearers, who then were led to wonder at the rich and free displays of God's power and grace, be left to neglect the great salvation and perish in your sins.

HISTORICAL DISCOURSES.

IV.

“Enlarge the place of thy tent and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes: For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame.”
ISAIAH 54th chap., 2-4th verses.

This language is highly poetical and beautiful. It is prophetic of a period of vast increase of Zion. The Gentile world is seen in vision, hastening to do homage and become united to the church. Palestine, the land of promise and hope, should become too strait as the possessions of the church under the reign of the Messiah, and other lands and distant territories should be given to the Redeemer. Hence the language of our text is a call upon the church to look out upon the field of promise—to prepare herself for a great enlargement of numbers by accessions from the heathen world. May God hasten rapidly the coming of the glorious church of the future; the church enlarged in her boundaries and filling the earth with heavenly blessings. Thus saith the Lord God, behold I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the

people, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.

We renew this morning, my brethren, the review of God's merciful dealings towards us as a church and a religious congregation. In the former discourses, we "have remembered the days of old"—we "have meditated" on God's work. We may be instructed and encouraged by the past, as well as the present; from God's providential dealings, as well as from the volume of holy revelation. The God of our fathers is our God, the church of his care for past years is the church of his care to-day. Let us then gratefully recount all his past mercies to us, and venture on the opening events of our future lives and christian responsibilities, with a most cheerful and abiding confidence in the word of Divine promise, and with hearts renewedly devoted to his service and honor, while we are privileged to work in the vineyard of the Lord.

Previous to the commencement of the gracious season of religious interest spoken of in our last discourse, Rev. Mr. Wilcox, the pastor, had signified to the church that convictions of duty led him seriously to entertain the idea of a change in his pastoral relation; that he felt impressed with the thought that his duty might lead him to another field of labor. Consequently on the 30th of September, at his own request, he was dismissed from the pastoral charge of the church and congregation. For six years Mr. Wilcox had continued usefully and acceptably to fill the office of pastor to this people, and was highly esteemed as a godly and devoted pastor and religious teacher. The church and society were in a highly prosperous condition when he left them.

The revival of 1842, to which we have referred, had produced a most marked and happy effect on the entire community.

Many of the congregation, who before this, had manifested no special interest in the spiritual welfare of themselves or of the community, now become decided in their attachments to the church and the cause of Zion. This attachment they have evinced since by the sincerity of their faith and by lives of obedience to God and an irreproachably consistent christian deportment.

In the month of November following the resignation of Mr. Wilcox, the church extended an invitation to Rev. Isaac Sawyer, of Deerfield, N. H., to take the pastoral oversight of the church and society. Mr. Sawyer, after due deliberation, accepted this call and entered upon the duties of the pastoral office early in the spring of 1843. The church was much quickened and the congregation enlarged, at the very beginning of Mr. Sawyer's ministry. The church was now large. Many of its members were young in christian experience and needed the care and nurture of an experienced and affectionate pastor. The previous experience of Mr. Sawyer in the work of the ministry was a pledge to the people here, of his adapt- edness to their wants, and he was most cordially received and his labors highly appreciated during the term of his ministry. This relation he sustained until the spring of 1849; a period of six years. We notice by the records of the doings of the church during this time, a good degree of prosperity both in the affairs of the society and the enlargement of the church by conversions. In September, 1843, the Salem Baptist Association met with them for the second time. The interest felt by the entire community in entertaining that religious body, was so great and the society so generally favored and promoted it by cordial and hearty co-operation, that the church, in their business meeting on the first of October, passed the following

vote of their appreciation of the kindness and good will of the society as manifested on that occasion :

"Unanimously Resolved, That we tender our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the congregation, which worship with us, for their kind and generous assistance in entertaining the Salem Baptist Association which met with us during the last week, and our prayer is, that as they kindly opened their doors to entertain the disciples of Jesus, they may also open their hearts that our blessed Lord may come in and sup with them and they with him."

Thus mutual and cordial was the true interest and love, manifested between the church and society ; the spiritual body leaving on record the appropriate and pious prayer that those who had freely imparted of their earthly things to aid the cause of their Redeemer might be rewarded by the Great Master in spiritual good.

On December 25th, 1846, after solemn prayer for Divine direction, the church, in accordance with a previous appointment proceeded to the choice of two deacons, electing Stephen Woodman and Enoch Sawyer to that office. In the spring of 1849, Rev. Mr. Sawyer, the pastor, having determined to leave for a distant part of the land, asked a dismission from his pastoral office, which, on the 18th of March, was granted with expressions of regret. Mr. Sawyer's ministry had been blessed to the conversion of a goodly number of the congregation, and he retained a strong hold on the affections of the people, rendering the dissolution a painful one to them. He possessed, it is said, the esteem and cordial sympathy of as large a portion of the community at the period of his removal as at any previous one of his ministry among the people, and his resignation was accepted at his own urgent request. Mr. Sawyer was the seventh pastor of the church since its organization, and he left the pastoral relation here at the deep regret of many warmly

attached friends. He is now the loved and useful pastor of a Baptist church in Pittsburg, Pa., where, as in his former fields of labor, he has been blessed of the Divine Master in bringing sinners to the Saviour and of comforting, enlarging and strengthening the church.

The resignation of Mr. Sawyer, left the church without a pastor. This vacancy, however, was soon supplied by the settlement of James M. Symonds. Mr. Symonds was invited here as a supply for a Sabbath or two without any reference to a settlement in the pastorate. But as they were destitute and he was without any definite engagement, the thoughts at first, and soon after the hearts of the people with great unanimity settled upon him as their spiritual teacher and pastor. Mr. Symonds had preached for them a few Sabbaths with general acceptance and a general expression of approbation from the church and society. Accordingly on the 8th of May, the church extended to him a hearty and cordial invitation to become their pastor. This invitation being as cordially responded to by the concurrent action of the society, and the expression being happily a unanimous one, Mr. Symonds accepted the call, and arrangements were immediately made by the church and society in concert with Mr. Symonds, for the services of ordination.

Mr. Symonds was set apart to the great work of the gospel ministry and as a pastor of this church and society by appropriate religious services and the laying on of hands on the 13th of June, 1849. The exercises of the occasion were performed as follows :

Introductory services by Rev. J. R. Manton, of Gloucester, Rev. A. S. Train, of Haverhill, and Rev. C. W. Reading, of Beverly ; Sermon, by Rev. Rufus Babcock, D. D., his former

pastor, from John 3rd, 2nd.—“A teacher sent from God.” Prayer of Ordination, Rev. J. Keeley, of Wenham; Charge, Rev. R. C. Mills, of Salem; Hand of Fellowship, Rev. T. D. Anderson, of Roxbury; Address to the Church and Society, Rev. C. W. Flanders, of Beverly; Concluding Prayer, Rev. P. S. Adams, of Newburyport.

The day was one of the loveliest and most beautiful of that charming month of the year, and the occasion brought out a very large concourse of people, from the village and the surrounding districts, as well as friends of the church and the pastor elect from abroad. The services are reported as having fixed the attention of a crowded audience and as having left valuable impressions on the minds of all present.

Mr. Symonds came among this people with a good report from those acquainted with him, and was warmly greeted and cheerfully welcomed by the community to his new and important field of labors. The people of his pastoral charge appreciated and highly prized the talents and the piety which they had not failed to discover in their young pastor.

Thus auspiciously commenced a ministry, soon to be terminated. Thus, high in hope and full of cheering promise, did one, chosen of God, assume the responsible charge of a large and interested flock, and enter upon the oversight thereof with a zeal and devotion worthy of great praise. But man knoweth not the end. It is the glory of God to conceal a matter. The sovereign mandate of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and giveth no account to any of his creatures of his doings, had gone forth, and soon the bright prospect was shrouded in darkness, and the ways and dealings of God were enveloped in a mystery impenetrable by mortals.

The hopeful and thankful feeling of the church in review of

the year, is thus summed up in their Associational letter. Little did any then anticipate the severe affliction so near at hand; little did any, in the fresh joyousness of this recent settlement, see the cloud of sorrow already gathering, or for a moment think that the stroke of a sudden dissolution was so near at hand. Say the Records—

“During the past Associational year our former pastor, Rev. Isaac Sawyer, asked and received a dismission from the pastoral charge of this church, leaving us destitute. In this condition, our prayer to God was, that he would send us a pastor to go in and out before us and break unto us the bread of life. And as we trust in answer to our prayers, our attention was soon directed to Br. James M. Symonds of Salem, and late a graduate of Newton Theological Institution, who received and accepted a unanimous call from this church and the society to become their pastor. He was ordained, June 13th. We were happily disappointed in obtaining so soon another pastor in whom we are *so well* united.”

This record was made the last of September. Mr. Symonds was then absent and in a poor state of health, which he and his loving people hoped might be fully restored by rest. But God's ways are not our ways. Mr. Symonds left here on the 3rd of September, and died the 17th of October, at Salem, among his own family friends, and in the same room where his own sainted mother met and triumphed over death, one year previous to his death.

Rev. James Munroe Symonds, the eighth pastor of this church, was born in Salem, July 1817. At an early age he was made the subject of serious religious impressions, and it is believed obtained the pardoning mercy of God. At about 20 years of age he made a public declaration of his faith in Christ, and united with the First Baptist Church in Salem. Believing himself divinely called of his Ascended Master to

prepare himself to labor in the great work of the ministry of reconciliation, he pursued his studies to that end. Graduating at Brown University in 1845, and at Newton Theological Institution in 1848, being esteemed in his entire course of study for his Christian character and his industry as a scholar. He was settled over this church and society with an entire unanimity of the people, and all who had sought for the Divine guidance in the choice and settlement of a pastor over them, felt that he was given in answer to prayer, and the relation was God approved, and therefore sacred: His ministry, however, in the inscrutable counsels of heaven was to be but a short one. Ordained the 13th of June, he left for Salem, on a visit, Sept. 3d, and died Oct. 17th, of a disease of the heart. Funeral services were performed at Salem, attended by a large number of his afflicted flock from this place, as well as numerous friends at Salem. Funeral services were conducted by the following brethren:—Rev. Mr. Lamson, Rev. Mr. Flanders, Rev. Mr. Mills, Rev. Mr. Anderson, and Rev. Mr. Eaton.

“O, for the death of those,
Who slumber in the Lord;
O, be like theirs, my last repose,
Like theirs my last reward.”

The ladies of this church and congregation erected a fitting head stone at his grave, bearing the following inscription:

Rev. James M. Symonds, Pastor of the First Baptist Church and Society in Salisbury and Amesbury,—Died in Salem, October 17th, 1849, Aged 32 years.

“He walked with God.”—“And though dead, he yet speaketh.”—He left his people the rich and heavenly legacy of a holy example and consistent christian life.

About the beginning of September, the proprietors of the

meeting house, in concurrence with the wishes of the church and society, determined on enlarging, the better to accommodate the numerous congregation and in accordance with the manifest wants of the community, in obtaining sittings for themselves and their families. The house was immediately sawn in sunder and a piece inserted sufficient to make twenty-four pews additional. This enterprise was entered upon and consummated with energy and commendable promptness. The house enlarged to its present dimensions, thoroughly repainted, frescoed and otherwise embellished, was re-entered in January 1850, when, at its opening service, Rev. Dr. Anderson, the former pastor of Mr. Symonds, delivered a most solemn and fitting discourse to a crowded audience, upon the life and death of the pastor so recently removed from the people by the all-wise and inscrutable will of God.

Again the church is destitute and the prayer of the pious is, that the Lord of the harvest would send them one to fill the place made vacant by the death of their late beloved pastor.

The present pastor is the ninth to whose spiritual oversight the church has been committed, during a period of eighty years. His ministry commenced on the 1st of April, 1850, he having accepted of a unanimous invitation extended to him by the church and society on the 4th of March previous, to become their pastor. The services of a Public Recognition took place according to previous arrangements, on the 5th of June. The Introductory Services were performed by Rev. Mr. Pinkham of West Amesbury; Prayer, by Rev. Mr. Lamson, of Portsmouth; Sermon, by Rev. Mr. Train, of Haverhill; Prayer of Recognition, by Rev. Mr. Medbury, of Newburyport; Charge, by Rev. Dr. Sharp, of Boston; Address to the Church and Society, by Rev. C. W. Flanders, of Beverly.

These services deeply interested and profited a large congregation of attentive listeners, and the day was most agreeably closed by a sermon in the evening by Rev. Dr. Sharp, upon "Brotherly love."

We now briefly review a ministry of ten years, the period which has elapsed since the settlement of the present pastor. We refer only to general facts. The good hand of God has been towards us, and the blessing of the Most High has been mercifully vouchsafed. Seasons of spiritual refreshment have been graciously granted, and the place of our habitation, spiritually, has been enlarged. The church has grown in numbers, notwithstanding many of the elder members—the fathers and mothers of the church have been called from their state of service and faithful labor on earth, to their reward in the heavenly world.

The years of the largest increase to the church have been those of 1850, the first year of the pastor's settlement, 1852, 1854, and 1858. The last named date, was the most distinguished, by the manifestations of the spirit's power. It was the year of great revivals in all parts of this country, and the beginning of that series of revivals, or rather of that one great revival, which takes in different and distant countries in its broad and beneficial course. A revival, beginning in this land, and now progressing with glorious power in the British Isles and the continent of Europe, and which we pray may not cease until the world is converted to God.

This religious awakening commenced among us in the latter part of 1857; the spirit of God, silently and yet manifestly was at work on the minds of both the members of the church and also of the unconverted. Previous to this we had been suffering from a sad decline, and a great want of interest was

manifested on the part of all in reference to the claims of religion and the eternal state. But a few hearts became more deeply interested and began to wrestle in prayer unto God for a revival of his work. This feeling greatly increased in the intensity of its urgency, and in the numbers of those who become mighty and all prevalent in prayer through the spirit. Help was afforded from on high—groanings which could not be uttered, were heard in heaven, and the “Set time to favor Zion” was at hand. God drew near in mercy, and a large number of souls were brought to feel his saving power in their hearts, and to join themselves to the people of God in an everlasting covenant.

This revival became the most general in the winter and spring of 1858. Meetings become frequent and crowded. The entire church, with great unanimity of feeling, and a spirit of renewed consecration to the service of the Lord, entered into this good work. Meetings were held during the afternoons and evenings of nearly every day for more than three months. Prayer was the mighty instrumentality used, and prayer, earnest, importunate and believing, drew down the inestimable treasures of grace and mercy from God. Never did a more complete oneness exist in the church, and God worked with his people. Many praying parents clasped the child of hope and of much agonizing prayer to their bosom with tears of thankfulness for their conversion to God. Many husbands and wives received their companions, for whom they had labored and prayed in the spirit, as spiritual companions in Christ and heirs with them of the heavenly inheritance, while many of all classes were led to believe and rejoice in Christ's pardoning love and mercy. From this revival the church received a larger addition to its membership than at any previous revival.

it had pleased the Great Head of the church to bestow upon them. Fifty-seven were added by baptism, and thirteen in other ways, making a total of seventy during the year. It was not by might, nor by power, but by the spirit of the Lord, and to his great name be ascribed all the praise. This season of spiritual refreshing will never be forgotten, and we feel that the church of the future is destined to feel the power and influence of some of those, who in this season of God's gracious manifestation have been made the willing and joyful subjects of his converting grace.

During the present pastoral relation, the Providence of God has been of a peculiarly marked character in the removal from the church by death of four Deacons. This has been as remarkable as it has been mysterious, that in the space of ten years four office-bearers should have been removed in this manner. Dea. Jeremiah Sawyer, the senior officer of the church, was called to his heavenly home on the 19th of April, 1854. He was baptized by Elder John Peak in September, 1809, and united with the church in Newburyport. In Nov. 1811, he removed his church relation and became connected with this church. He had been a conscientious and devoted Christian, and a consistent member of the church for forty-five years, and a large portion of that time an officer in the church. He died full of years and ripened in piety. Of few men could it be said, as it might with all justice be of Dea. Sawyer, that he ever maintained an unspotted Christian life through the entire course of his church membership. Living in the days of trial and many grievous annoyances for conscience sake, during the early part of his discipleship, he loved, honored and firmly maintained his denominational views. But he was never indifferent to the great brotherhood of the saints. He

loved all who loved Christ, his Savior, and longed for a union of the whole household of faith. He lived beloved, and died lamented by all who knew him. But death was soon to make another breach in our midst. Even at the instant when the father died, the son was fast declining and preparing to meet his sainted parent in the heavenly state. United in life, both in church relation and in their official position, as well as by natural relationship, so in death they were not long sundered. Dea. Enoch Sawyer, the son of Dea. Jeremiah Sawyer, died on the 20th of the September following his father's death in April. Death came to him not unexpectedly, nor did it find him unprepared for the summons. In Deacon Sawyer's death was illustrated the power of a living faith to overcome the fears of death—subject to bondage in his life time through fear of death, as the last messenger drew near, his faith grew clearer and stronger, so that he anticipated his last change with triumphant joy. "Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." Dea. Sawyer died in the meridian of life, beloved as a prudent man, a wise counsellor, a sincere Christian, and a worthy member of this church, and he left a name of good report by those who are without.

Dea. Isaac Tuxbury, the third in order of the departed office-bearers of this church, since the settlement of the present pastor, died May 22d, 1859. His death was sudden, though not unanticipated. While returning from the sanctuary at noon on the Sabbath, he was met by the last messenger before he reached his family and home, and though his wife and children and sorrowing friends were soon at his side, his spirit passed away ere he could be conveyed to his house. But death was no messenger of terror to him, nor was his approach an unwelcome one; he came as a consecrated servant, an angel of

God, to loose the silver cords of life and let the freed spirit wing its way back to God. Dea. Tuxbury was baptized, Sept. 1820, was elected to the office of Deacon in 1831, and for about thirty-nine years faithfully served this church. Ever at the post of duty in the church, constant at all meetings, public and private, his influence was constantly felt in all the interests of the church, and his example was worthy of the imitation of all the younger members in the regularity and constancy with which he served the church.

In less than a year after the death of Dea. Tuxbury, the church was suddenly called to mourn the departure of another of the Deacons. Dea. William Carruthers died March 6th, 1860. From a youth he had been a professed disciple of Jesus Christ. His earliest connection was with the Congregational church, in which communion his father and brother were ministers, and his family friends were there all connected. He was baptized by Rev. Elijah Foster in 1831 and became a member of this church, and soon after his union with the church was by the confidence of his brethren, elected to the office of Deacon, which office he filled till his death. He had done much for the church, especially during the earlier years of his connection with it. Possessed of strong native talents, enlarged and improved by reading, he became a very effective speaker on all the topics which engaged his thoughts. The claims of the poor, the enslaved, the unfortunate of all classes, received his sympathies. He was an ardent friend of missions, and all the religious and benevolent enterprises of the church. His death was sudden, and the sadness of all hearts at the announcement of his death, showed how deep the community felt his loss. We doubt not that he has joined those who had gone before him in a better world.

On the 22d of June, 1859, the church, in accordance with previous appointment, proceeded to the election of two more Deacons to fill the places of those who had been called from them by death. The choice of the church, by a unanimous vote, fell upon brethren Ebenezer Tucker and Benjamin S. Blake. These two brethren, and Stephen Woodman, now bear the office of deacons in this church.

While we, my brethren, cherish the names and the virtues of the departed ones, let us never be unmindful of that gracious Providence which has so mercifully watched over all the passed years of the church, and filled the vacancies made in our midst, by the constant blessing of his spirit on the word preached, and the bringing in of other faithful brethren and sisters to fill the places of those made vacant by the hand of death. "Whatsoever our hands findeth to do" let us do it with our might, for there is no work nor wisdom, nor knowledge, nor device in the grave.

Having briefly passed over these records of the church and presented to you some of the prominent and reliable facts connected with the past, we gather up for a condensed summary the following results:

The whole number connected with the church since its organization as a Branch, to the present time, has been about 700. Of the constituent members of the church none now remain—but of their immediate descendants, there have ever been found some in the church through all her struggles, her persecutions, and her triumphs; whose love to the principles and practices of their fathers, and whose zeal in maintaining the great truths for which they suffered and sacrificed so much and so willingly, have given stability and strength to the church. Instead of the fathers who have finished their course

on earth, have been their children and their children's children, and God has been faithful to all his promises. Of this 700 members, who have at different times found here a home, 120 of them were united to the church while it sustained the relation of a branch, a period of forty-one years, or an average of about three members a year. From 1821 to 1860, there have been added about 600, making an average during the thirty-seven years of about fifteen a year. Of the thirty-seven members who belonged to the church at the time that it became an Independent church in 1821, there remain now in the church only three, Ruth Morrill, Anna Boardman and Frederick Bagley, and of that three, only one, Bro. Bagley, has been able to attend the public worship, or the ordinances of the church for some years past. As the children of Israel, after a sojourn of forty years in the wilderness, were all swept away by the stroke of death, and two only, Joshua and Caleb, entered into the land of Canaan, with the children of those who had fallen on the way;—so we, after the lapse of forty years, find the entire membership of this church swept into their graves with the exception of the three we have named, only one of which number is now able to mingle in our public services. Our fathers and mothers have fallen asleep and gone to their reward, while their children and others who have joined themselves to the Lord and to his people in covenant, enter into and enjoy the fruits of their toils and sacrifices in asserting and defending the faith of the gospel.

The church has been served by the gifts and labors of nine pastors, exclusive of the labors of Dr. Shepherd, who had the oversight of the branch for many years, in connection with the church at Brentwood. We should also record the names of those worthy servants of God, Rev. Mr. Grant and Rev.

Mr. Evans. Rev. Mr. G. Crocker also labored for a season, assisting Mr. Foster during his illness, as we have stated in its place. During the entire period of the existence of the church as a branch of Brentwood, the pastoral office was sustained by Elder Chase and Elder True, in connection with Dr. Shepherd, who made occasional visits for preaching among them. Since 1822, the termination of Elder True's services, a period of thirty-eight years, the church has enjoyed the labors of seven pastors, the Rev. Mr Barnaby, two terms, making about four years; Rev. Mr. Foster, three years; Rev. Mr. Crane, one year; Rev. Mr. Wilcox, six years; Rev. Mr. Sawyer, six years; Rev. Mr. Symonds, four months, and the present pastor, ten years.

The pastoral relation has been terminated twice by death, or sickness terminating in death. These both died young; Rev. Mr. Foster at the age of thirty-five, and Rev. Mr. Symonds at the age of thirty-two—both lovely in life, talented, pious, and consecrated in a high degree to the great work to which their Lord and Master had called them. Early gone! But not lost, not lost to the church on earth or in heaven. Being dead they yet speak to the church by that example and influence which survives death, while we doubt not in their glorified state above, have been transferred to that condition of activity for which they were prepared. God only knows, brethren, whether we may do most for him, for his kingdom and his glory, on earth or in heaven, and he orders our ways as he sees best for us and his cause. The other five pastors yet live, it is believed, and are engaged in active service in some part of their Master's vineyard.

The office of deacons has been filled by ten brethren. Three before the separation from the Brentwood church and seven

since ; of this number only three survive, and they are the present deacons of the church. Death has removed four from their services in the church in the brief space of six years past, and thus solemnly admonishing us that we know not what a day may bring forth. Therefore, let all watch and pray, for the Master cometh at an hour that we think not of and in a day we are not aware of his approach.

It has been the privilege of this church to have been honored of God in sending forth into the gospel ministry five young men from her number, to be spiritual laborers in the great harvest-field of the church. These are, George W. Cate, William Douglas, Charles W. Flanders, Francis E. Prevaux, and S. Farnsworth Brown. Of these five brethren, George W. Cate and Francis E. Prevaux, have finished their work and entered their eternal rest. The others are now actively engaged in the work of the ministry.

In this series of Historical Discourses upon the Rise and Progress of this Church and Society we have passed, my hearers, over a period of some eighty years, eventful years, for all bear reports to heaven, and lay before the throne of God accounts of deeds accomplished, lives lived, characters formed, and events, assuming shape and form for future life or for eternity. What events, full of telling interest, and accountable effort have transpired within the bounds of this Christian church and congregation during the four score years, the period of a life time of some yet among us ! How many have lived, acted and died within that space of time ! How many have here labored in the Great Master's service—sowed the seeds of gospel truths—wept and prayed for the precious harvest of the future, and dying have left to us their inheritance ! How many precious souls have here, under the gospel of the grace of God, been

fitting for the great future, and have gone with their characters matured, their lives written and their work finished, to meet the joyous or the dreadful awards of that life, before the throne of God above! May we draw such lessons of profit as shall make our lives better, our service to God and truth more earnest and faithful, and our eternal state more certainly one of immortal bliss and glory.

We hasten now from the past—from the historic records of the church's struggles and feebleness to its condition of permanency and strength, and seek to gather up a few brief and instructive lessons, and draw a few reflections before we close this discourse, and with it this series of hasty historical outlines, of brief biography, and the statements of principles which made the lives and times of our denominational fathers so eventful and so earnest. May we, my hearers, be the "followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

The history of the church as we have traced it along in its pathway of prosperity and usefulness shows us—first of all, and perhaps a fact as deeply affecting its entire history as any other, except its piety and its love of truth, that *a great and marked unanimity of feeling and action has ever existed among its members*. This statement applies to the whole period of the eighty years we have here contemplated. God has blessed his people with a oneness of feeling and of action, a spirit of concord, of harmonious deliberations, of unity in views entertained and promulgated, and of concentration in plans and labors to advance the Redeemer's kingdom. We find no evidences of a division seriously affecting the unity of the church, or interrupting it in its great mission as an effective working power in the cause of the Redeemer. Commis-

sioned, as she evidently has been, to a high and holy work; consecrated as have been her ministers and members as laborers in the Master's vineyard, no heresy has been permitted to prevail within her sacred enclosure to an extent that might injure her usefulness. And in the few cases of individual defection from the faith, the separation of the disaffected from the body has been in such a manner as to leave the body united and prosperous in its work. True, there have been days and years of great and sore trial, errors and false doctrines have been fiercely promulgated, and the faith of Christians severely assailed, so as to deceive, if it were possible, "the very elect" of God's people, but I believe that the harmony of sentiment and practice in this church has never materially suffered thereby. While many of the churches of our own and other denominations have been subjected to fiery trials, and even divided into factions by cunning zealots and the arrogance of presumptuous leaders, there has here ever been a spirit of harmony, a united brotherhood in church relation, and a firmness in the defence of the gospel in the entire body. In this Christian bond there has been a firm holding of the head in the unity of the *one Lord—one faith—one baptism* of the New Testament Church. And this spirit has greatly promoted the stability, the enlargement and the efficiency of the church in each progressive stage of her existence. This has contributed essentially to give her the position of power and influence which she now holds in this enlightened and enterprising community.

As illustrative of the facts now stated, we find among the incidental and interesting occurrences of the past, the following, indicative of the wonderful ways and providences of God. At one period there were connected with this church, in the sacred relation of harmonious membership, persons from seven

different nations ; born in different and distant lands, possessing educational peculiarities and national preferences, widely and vastly different, yet here have they been associated in one loving band of disciples ; members of the same Christian church, bowing at the same altar of prayer and praise, and striving together for the honor and glory of the same common Redeemer and Saviour.

Among these representatives of different nations here found as one in Christ Jesus, might have been seen two, whose early lives and services had been of a widely different character, which would have engendered and fostered feelings opposite to those which they have cherished towards each other in their relation as members of the body of Christ. They had spent their earlier life in the tented field and amid the pomp and marshal array of battle. The one a soldier in the French army, under the renowned Napoleon 1st, the other in the British army, under the conqueror of Napoleon, the Duke of Wellington. But now being made one through the power of the eternal spirit and heirs together of the grace of life, their national hostilities are remembered no more, they love as brethren in Christ, and side by side with the armor of the gospel girded on, they stand up as the soldiers of Jesus Christ, the captain of salvation and the Prince of Peace.

Is there not in this spirit, my brethren, the foreshadowing of a more glorious union to be effected by the gospel of the Son of God ? Mankind are but one family, offspring of the same heavenly parent, children of the same Almighty Father, and in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him. May God hasten that blessed day, long since foreseen in prophetic vision, and yet delayed in its consummation, the day when "one song shall employ all

nations," and all cry, "Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us!"

"The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy;
Till, nation after nation, taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous hosannah round."

The *second* subject demanding our grateful acknowledgment to God on our review of the past, is *the happy change in the condition and position of our denomination* since the days of the early fathers of this church. This felicitous change is not alone seen and felt in this place and this section of the land, but in all parts of our land and concerning the denomination in general. How vastly changed the relative position of the Baptists and their opposers since that day! We have in view of all that God has done for us reason to exclaim, "What hath God wrought!"

Then, churches of the Baptist faith were few, feeble, and in an obscure position—their members widely scattered and poor in earthly goods, their sentiments misrepresented and despised by the many, and the whole denomination as a consequence, and all adherents to their opinions were placed under grievous civil disabilities. On the other hand, power, wealth, and offices of trust and control were all placed in the hands of those who oppressed them. The churches recognized by the State, leaned upon the civil government for support and encouragement, and demanded the arm of its authority for the crushing of its opponents. Infant baptism was then an established dogma, having an universal and unquestioned dominion in the churches, and was entrenched by what seemed to be an invincible and invulnerable public opinion. The rite was made to possess a mysterious efficacy and a sanctifying power, so that to die without baptism was to endanger the salvation of

the soul. Hence the Baptists were deemed and treated as disturbers of the harmony of the church, and enemies to the religious convictions and established customs which swayed and controlled the Christian community.

But God be thanked for that great and happy change now so patent to all reflecting minds. The triumphs of truth have been mighty—the change in public opinion has been great and happy in its influence in advancing the truth. Churches of the Baptist faith have increased in an unprecedented degree and been established in all parts of the land. The number of communicants has been multiplied by hundreds of thousands, while in wealth, in education, in social position and general influence in society, they have attained and now occupy a most enviable and honorable post. The doctrine of believer's Baptism, to the exclusion both of infant baptism and of sprinkling as substitute for baptism, has obtained a very general credence in the public mind and bids fair soon to obtain the exclusive practices of all Protestant churches. We hail as a delightful promise of a true unity in the Christian church, all evidences of candor of investigation, all careful study of the word of God, accompanied with prayer for the illumination of the Holy Spirit; all sincere seeking to ascertain what the Divine truth reveals and what the will of God is, in reference to this great truth. May no human influence be allowed to prevent God's people from yielding a strict obedience to his word in all things. Then, speedily shall come that day when the watchmen shall see eye to eye, and together lift up their voices with harmony of sentiment, in defence of the primitive faith of the gospel.

A *third* subject of reflection arising from our review is in reference to the *steady and constant changes produced in our numbers by the event of death.*

Our Fathers, where are they? Generations of them have gone to the grave—gone through the world, gone out of the world and gone into eternity. But we hope that being dead they yet speak—that their influence lives and is felt by us all. We have glanced at some features in their life's history, at the religious aspects of their connection with this church and society. But how soon is the brief record of the years of their lives closed! Where are the prophets, the ministers, who once here uttered the messages of the Most High? Where are the men and women of a former generation, who listened to their tones of warning or of comfort, and whose lives and future destiny were moulded by their power? We repeat the names of Shepherd, Chase, True, Peak and others of God's ministers, who have spoken to this religious society the word of the Lord, but where are they? Done, their labors—ceased, their lives of toil and sacrifice for the truth. And where are those noble men and godly women who for conscience sake suffered self denials, who labored and fainted not in the hour of trial? Gone—finished their honored lives and their faithful testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus. Gone to their account and their reward on high.

Or if we take the second period of our review before us, if we trace the church's history since its independent formation, we have the same mournful facts before us. In the ministry, where is now the loved Foster and others of precious memory?

“ They, the holy ones and weakly,
Who the Cross of suffering bore,
Folded their pale hands so meekly,
Speak, with us on earth no more.”

And the young, the talented, the lamented Symonds! How sweetly still lingers in living power his memory among us, like a heavenly inspiration to noble doing.

"He, the young and strong, who cherished
 Noble longings for the strife;
 By the wayside fell and perished,
 Weary, with the march of life."

Turn we then from the ministry to the membership of the church, bought with the Redeemer's blood; of the active members forty years ago, only three survive the wreck of mortality. The rest have ended the race, and these three who yet remain are living in voiceless communion with the past; are waiting the hour, by heaven ordained, for a reunion above! How solemnly these facts preach to us, who enter into their labor. Death has hushed their voices and silenced the tongue of eloquence, but in influence they live, and their example cheers us on our pilgrim way to the better land above.

My brethren and friends, if I may be indulged with a reference to my own emotions and aspirations, as I have retraced the lives and deeds of those gone before us, I would say, that

"Thus, though oft depressed and weary,
 All my fears are laid aside;
 If, I but remember only,
 Such as these, have lived, and died."

Another thought arising from our subject, is *that it is of great importance for us, the present members of this church and society, to clearly understand, firmly adhere to and steadfastly to maintain the doctrines of the gospel in their purity.* The unity of this church has been maintained, its harmony preserved and its prosperity secured, by loving, defending, and with conscientious fidelity adhering to, the institutions and faith of the gospel. On this alone God has blessed her and multiplied her as a flock. Here she has won her victories of truth and here been blessed with the approbation and presence of the God of mercy. And is it a false, or a hasty conviction, that our future success or defeat, our enlarged prosperity or

our declining power, will depend, largely, upon our sacredly keeping the faith? Must we not understand our mission and our obligations in reference to the great distinctive doctrines of the denomination, and thus honor the institutions, and the authority of Him, who is Head over all things unto the Church? Forsake these doctrines of Christ, cease our fidelity in asserting and defending their commanding authority over the heart and the conscience, and we must expect to be forsaken of God. The life must be obedient to God—the will submissive and then may we continue confidently to expect the broad and hallowed seal of our Divine Master's approbation.

FINALLY—if we would have God to be with us as He has been with our fathers, *we must embrace and live ever under the power of the faith of the gospel.* They loved, they believed, and they preached the doctrines of the gospel in all their simplicity and truth. Repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of lost men they constantly affirmed, and these great cardinal doctrines were fundamental in their preaching. We, like them, must believe, heartily embrace, and earnestly defend the gospel of reconciliation. Our prosperity must not seduce us from a defence of the faith, nor must we permit our sufferings, persecutions or scandal to deter us from promulgating the truths which our Master has committed to us as a sacred and invaluable trust.

And you, my hearers, who have not with the heart believed unto righteousness, nor with the mouth confessed the Lord Jesus Christ as your hope and your friend, O, haste to secure the favor and the salvation of God. Let none live in disobedience to him whose goodness has so signally marked all the footsteps of our fathers, and brought forth and nourished this vine of his own planting and made it strong for himself. As

he has been the God of our fathers so let him be our God. Let us honor him in life, that he may be our present and our everlasting reward. Is it needful for me, my hearers, to remind any of you of the uncertainty of life and the importance of living in a state of daily, constant preparation for death and all the solemn issues of the future world? Shall the voices of past generations, that have gone from this religious society into the eternal world be disregarded and unheard by the living? How near we stand to the grave, how soon we pass on to the retributions of the world of spirits!

“Amid ten thousand snares we stand,
Supported by his guardian hand;
And see, when we review our ways,
Ten thousand monuments of praise.”

Surely, the goodness of God leadeth us to repentance, and let it never be said to the reproach of our deep and fearful depravity that we returned not unto the Lord, according to all the benefits he has bestowed upon us.

Who will hear and take heed for the time to come? Who will this day—this hour, turn penitently to God and seek the salvation offered them in the gospel of reconciliation? “Behold now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation.” O, let us all unite in earnest supplications before the mercy seat and say now at the close of this review of the past, “O, Lord, we beseech thee send now prosperity”—“Send us help out of Zion, for vain is the help of man.”

NOTES.

Note A—referred to on page 35. The Petition addressed to the Legislature of the State for an act of Incorporation was as follows:—

“To the Honorable, the Senate and the House of Representatives, of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in General Court assembled, Respectfully present the subscribers, inhabitants of the towns of Salisbury and Amesbury, in the County of Essex, that there has been a Baptist Church and Society in Salisbury, with a regular teacher of Piety, Religion and Morality, for more than twenty years past, and have had their part of the minister rates paid to their own minister, agreeable to the Constitution, as they understood it. But by a late decision of the Supreme Bench, the Congregational Societies in said towns say that the Baptists are not entitled to their part of the money as they have been in time past.

Your Petitioners humbly pray that they, together with such others as may join with them and their successors, may be incorporated into a religious Society, by the name of **THE FIRST BAPTIST SOCIETY IN**

SALISBURY, with all powers, privileges and immunities that other religious Societies are entitled to under the Constitution and Laws of this Commonwealth.

And as in duty bound will ever pray.

Salisbury, May 16, 1811.

Jabez True,
Moses Gill,
Ezekiel Fowler,
Joseph Flanders,
Thomas Boardman, Jr.*
Nathaniel Ring,
Thomas Boardman, Sen.
Moses Flanders,
David Currier,
Philip Wadleigh,
Henry Maxfield,
John Morrill,
David Morrill, Jr.
Bennet Flanders,
Nathan Flanders,
Bradbury Morrill,
Henry Goodwin, Jr.
Thomas Frost,
Stephen Greely,
Samuel A. Tucker,
James Tucker,
William Morrill,
David Morrill.

William Huntington, Jr.,
Samuel Follansbee,
Benjamin Morrill,
Daniel Barnard,
Moses Greely,
Philip Gould,
Richard Currier,
Jeremiah Sawyer,
Aaron Clough,
William Goodridge,
Daniel Fowler,
Jonathan Martin,
Allen Greely,*
Charles Bayles,
Joseph Boardman,
Jonathan Morrill, (A.)
Benjamin Currier,
Abraham Morrill, Jr.*
Samuel Morrill,
Stephen Brown, (Capt.)
Jacob Currier,
James Quimby,*
Eliphalet Lowell.

*Those marked with a star are believed to be yet living.

P. S. We do not find the name of Dea. Thomas Flanders and some other prominent members of the Baptist Society, known to have acted with them in those days, affixed to this petition. The reason doubtless is, that they did not reside in this State, and hence could not consistently sign a petition to the Legislature of Massachusetts for such an object.

Note B—referred to on page 35.

To JACOB BROWN, Esq., *one of the Justices of the Peace for the County of Essex*:

We, the subscribers, members of the First Baptist Society in Salisbury, hereby request that you would issue a Warrant to one of said

subscribers, requiring him to notify and warn a meeting of said Baptist Society, to be held in some convenient time and place for the purpose of Organizing said society, by the appointment of its officers, agreeably to an act of incorporation.

Salisbury, August 15th, 1812.

ESSEX, ss. To Joseph Flanders, one of the signers of the foregoing application : You are hereby required in the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to notify and warn the members of the First Baptist Society in Salisbury, to meet at the Baptist Meeting-house in said Salisbury, on Wednesday the 26th day of August, current, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, for the purpose of organizing said Society, by the appointment of its officers agreeably to the foregoing application and act of incorporation.

Hereof fail not, and make return of this Warrant with your doings hereon, at the time and place of holding said meeting.

Given under my hand and seal, at Salisbury, the 15th day of August, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and twelve.

JACOB BROWN, *Just. Peace.*

Pursuant to the foregoing Warrant, to me directed, I hereby notify and warn the members of the First Baptist Society in Salisbury, to meet at the time and place, and for the purposes as mentioned and expressed in the foregoing Warrant.

JOSEPH FLANDERS.

Salisbury, August 15th, 1812.

Note C—referred to on page 39. We have corrected only the spelling to conform it to present use.

To Dea. Jabez True, your Cow that I took for your parish tax for 1811, was struck off to Capt Samuel Eaton for 15 dollars.

Your tax is	\$8,81
For taking, advertising and vendueing,	1,50
For keeping,	50
	<hr/>
	10,81

JOSEPH STEVENS. *Parish Collector.*

Salisbury, December 13th, 1813.

Note D—referred to on page 53. The following list contains the names of the thirty-seven members connected with the church at the date of its re-organization as an independent church, September 14th, 1821 :—

Jabez True, (Elder,)	Frederick Bagley,
Ruth True,	Moses Emery,
Dea. Thomas Flanders,	John Webster,
Priscilla Flanders,	Rhoda Greeley,
Nathaniel Flanders,	Hannah Fowler,
Judith Flanders,	Ruth Morrill,
Samuel Flanders,	Moses Morrill,
Isaac Tuxbury, Jr.	Lois Barnard,
Joseph Flanders,	Molly Chandler,
Susannah Flanders,	Hannah Goodwin,
Lydia Tuxbury,	Jeremiah Sawyer,
Catherine Ring,	Betsey Sawyer,
Meriam Bayley (Martin)	Lois Fitts,
Josiah Plummer,	Hannah Penson,
Betsey Flanders,	Samuel Morrill,
Susannah Webster,	Moses Gill,
Sarah Barnard,	Rhoda Currier,
Anna Boardman,	Affa Yell,
	Ruth Morrill.

A

MANUAL

OF THE

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

OF

SALISBURY AND AMESBURY.

A SUMMARY DECLARATION OF FAITH AND PRACTICE.

Having been enabled by Divine grace to give up ourselves unto the Lord, and likewise to each other by the will of God, we account it a duty incumbent upon us to make a Declaration of our FAITH and PRACTICE, to the honor of Christ and glory of his name; knowing, that as with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, so with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

I. OF THE SCRIPTURES.

We believe the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true centre of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.

Places in the Bible where taught.

2 Tim. 3 : 16, 17. 2 Pet. 1 : 21 ; 2 Sam. 23 : 2 ; Acts 1 : 16;—3 : 21, John 10 : 35 ; Luke 16 : 29–31 ; Ps. 119 : 111 ; Rom. 3 : 1, 2. 2 Tim. 3 : 15. 1 Pet. 1 : 10–12 ; Acts. 11 : 14 ; Rom. 1 : 16 ; Mark 16 : 16 ; John 5 ;

34-39. Prov. 30: 5, 6. John 17: 17; Rev. 22: 18, 19; Rom. 3: 4; Rom. 2: 12; John 12: 47, 48; 1 Cor. 4: 3, 4; Luke 10: 10-16; 12: 47, 48. Phil. 3: 16; Ephes. 4: 3-6; Phil. 2: 1, 2; 1 Cor. 1: 10; 1 Pet. 4: 11. 1 John 4: 1; Isa. 7: 20; 1 Thes. 5: 21; 2 Cor. 13: 5; Acts 17: 11; 1 John 4: 6; Jude 3d verse; Eph. 6: 17; Psa. 116: 59, 60; Phil. 1: 9-11.

II. OF THE TRUE GOD.

That there is one, and only one, true and living God, whose name is JEHOVAH, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness; worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; revealed under the personal and relative distinctions of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

Psa. 83: 18; Heb. 3: 4; Rom. 1: 20; Jer. 10: 10. Exod. 15: 11. Isa. 6: 3; 1 Pet. 1: 15, 16; Rev. 4: 6-8. Mark 12: 30; Rev. 4: 11; Math. 10: 37; Jer. 2: 12, 13. Matt. 28: 19; John 15: 26; 1 Cor. 12: 4-6; 1 John 5: 7. John 10: 30; John 5: 17; 14, 23; Acts 5: 3, 4; 1 Cor. 3: 10, 11. Eph. 2: 18; 2 Cor. 2: 14; Rev. 1: 4, 5.

III. OF THE FALL OF MAN.

That man was created in a state of holiness, under the law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice, being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, wholly given to the gratification of the world, of Satan, and of their own sinful passions, and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defence or excuse.

Gen. 1: 27; 1: 31; Eccl. 7: 29; Acts 17: 20; Gen. 2: 16. Gen. 3: 6-24; Rom. 5: 12. Rom. 5: 19; John 3: 6; Psa. 51: 5; Rom. 5: 15-19; 8: 7. Isa. 53: 6; Gen. 6: 12; Rom. 3: 9-18. Eph. 2: 1-3; Rom. 1: 18; 1: 32; Gal. 3: 10; Matth. 23: 41; Rev. 20: 15. Ezek. 18: 19, 20; Rom. 1: 32; Gal. 3: 22.

IV. THE WAY OF SALVATION.

That the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, through

the Mediatorial Offices of the Son of God, who took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the law by his personal obedience, and made atonement for our sins by his death; being risen from the dead he is now enthroned in heaven; and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Saviour.

Eph. 2: 5; Matth. 18: 11; 1 John 4: 10; 1 Cor. 3: 5-7; Acts 15: 11. John 3: 16; 1: 1-14; Heb. 4: 14; 12: 24. Phil. 2: 6, 7; Heb. 2: 9; 2: 14; 2 Cor. 8: 9. Isa. 62: 21; Phil. 2: 8; Gal. 4: 4, 5; Rom. 3: 21. Isa. 53: 4; Matth. 20: 28; Rom. 4: 25; 3: 21-26; 1 John 4: 10; 2: 2; 1 Cor. 15: 1-3; Heb. 9: 13-15. Heb. 1: 8; 1: 3; 8: 3; Col. 3: 1-4. Heb. 7: 25; Col. 2: 9; Heb. 2: 18; 7: 26; Psal. 89: 19; Psal. 45.

V. OF JUSTIFICATION.

That the great Gospel blessing which Christ of his fulness bestows on such as believe in Him, is Justification; that Justification consists in the pardon of sin and the promise of eternal life, on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through His own redemption and righteousness; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

John 1: 16; Eph. 3: 8. Acts 13: 39; Isa. 53: 11; Rom. 8: 1. Rom. 5: 9; Zech. 13: 1; Matth. 9: 6; Acts 10: 43. Rom. 5: 17; Tit. 3: 5, 6; 1 Pet. 3: 8; 1 John 2: 25; Rom. 5: 21. Rom. 4: 4, 5; 5: 21; 6: 23; Phil. 3: 7-9. Rom. 5: 19; 3: 24-26; 1 John 2: 12. Rom. 5: 1, 2; 5: 3; 5: 11; 1 Cor. 1: 30; Mat. 6: 36; 1 Tim. 4: 8.

VI. OF THE FREENESS OF SALVATION.

That the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, except his own vol-

untary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ, which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation.

Rev. 22: 17; Isa. 55: 1; Luke 14: 17. Rom. 16: 25, 26; Mark 1: 15; Rom. 1: 15, 17. John 5: 40; Matth. 23: 37; Rom. 9: 32; Prov. 1: 24; Acts 13: 46. John 3: 19; Matth. 11: 20; Luke 19: 27; 2 Thess. 1: 8.

VII. OF GRACE IN REGENERATION.

That in order to be saved, we must be regenerated or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind, and is effected in a manner above our comprehension or calculation, by the power of the holy spirit, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; and that its proper evidence is found in the holy fruit which we bring forth to the glory of God.

John 3: 3; 3: 7; Rev. 21: 27. 2 Cor. 5: 20; Ezek. 36: 26; Deut. 30: 6; Rom. 2: 28, 29; 5: 5; 1 John 4: 7. John 3: 8; 1: 13; James 1: 16-18; 1 Cor. 1: 30; Phil. 2: 13. 1 Pet. 1: 22-25; 1 John 5: 1; Eph. 4: 20-24; Col. 3: 9-11. Eph. 5: 9; Rom. 8, 9; Gal. 5: 16-23; Eph. 3: 14-21.

VIII. OF GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE.

That Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which he regenerates, sanctifies and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely wise, holy and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it is ascertained by its effects in all who believe the Gospel; is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves, demands and deserves our utmost diligence.

2 Tim. 1: 8, 9; Eph. 1: 3-14; 1 Pet. 1: 2; Rom. 11: 5, 6; John 15, 16; 1 John 4: 19; Hos. 12: 9. 2 Thes. 2: 13, 14; Acts 13: 48; John 10: 16; Matth. 20: 16; Acts 15: 14. Exod. 33: 18, 10; Matth. 20: 15; Eph. 1: 11; Rom. 9: 23, 24; Jer. 31: 3; Rom. 11, 28, 29; Jas. 1: 17, 18;

2 Tim. 2: 9; Rom. 11; 32-36. 1 Cor. 4: 7; 1: 26-31; Rom. 3: 27; 4: 16; Col. 3: 12; 1 Cor. 3: 5-7; 15: 10; 1 Pet. 5: 10; Acts 1: 24; 1 Thes. 2: 13; 1 Pet. 2: 9; Luke 18: 7; John 15: 16; Eph. 1: 16; 1 Thes. 2: 12. 2 Tim. 2: 10; 1 Cor. 9: 22; Rom. 8: 28-30; John 6: 37-40; 2 Pet. 1: 10. 1 Thes. 1: 4-10. Rom. 8: 28-39; Isa. 42: 16; Rom. 11: 29. 2 Pet. 1: 10; Phil. 3: 12; Heb. 6: 11.

IX. OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS.

That such only are real believers as endure unto the end ; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from mere professors ; that a special Providence watches over their welfare ; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

John 8: 31; 1 John 2: 27, 28; 3: 9; 5: 18. 1 John 2: 19; John 13: 18; Matth. 13: 20, 21; John 6: 66-69. Rom. 8: 28; Matth. 6: 30-33; Jer. 32: 40; Psa. 121: 3; 91: 11, 12. Phil. 1: 6; 2: 12; 13; Jude 24, 25; 2 Kings 6: 16. Heb. 1: 14; 13: 5; 1 John 4: 4; John 10: 27-30; 11: 25, 26.

X. HARMONY OF THE LAW AND GOSPEL.

That the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government ; that it is holy, just and good ; and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfil its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin ; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church.

Rom. 3: 21; Matth. 5: 17; Luke 16: 17; Rom. 3: 20; 4: 15. Rom. 7: 12; 7: 7, 14, 22; Gal. 3: 21; Psa. 119. Rom. 8: 7, 8; Josh. 24: 19; Jer. 13: 23; John 8: 44; 5: 44. Rom. 8: 2-4; 10: 4; 1 Tim. 1: 5; Heb. 8: 10; Jude 20, 21; Heb. 12: 1.

XI. OF A GOSPEL CHURCH.

That a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ ; governed by his laws ; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested

in them by his word ; that its only proper officers are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the epistles to Timothy and Titus.

1 Cor. 1: 13; Matth. 18: 17; Acts. 5: 11; 8: 1; 11; 26; 1 Cor. 4: 17; 14: 23; 3 John 9; 1 Tim. 3: 5. Acts 2: 41, 42; 2 Cor. 8: 5; Acts 2: 47; 1 Cor. 5: 12, 13. 1 Cor. 11: 2; 2 Thess. 3: 6; Rom. 16: 17-20; 1 Cor. 11: 23; Matth. 18: 15-20; 1 Cor. 5 & 6; 2 Cor. 2 & 7; 1 Cor. 4: 17. Matth. 28: 20; John 14: 15; 15: 12; 1 John 4: 21. John 14: 21; 1 Thess. 4: 2; 2 John 6; Gal. 6: 2; all the Epistles. Eph. 4: 7; 1 Cor. 14: 12; Phil. 1: 27. Phil. 1: 1; Acts 14: 23; 15: 22; 1 Tim. 3; Titus 1.

XII. OF BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

That Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit ; to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in a crucified, buried and risen Saviour, with its purifying power ; that it is pre-requisite to the privileges of a church relation ; and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church, by the use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

Acts 8: 36-39; Matth. 3: 5, 6; John 3: 22, 23; 4: 1, 2; Matth. 28: 19; Mark 16: 16; Acts 2: 38; 8: 12; 16: 32-34; 18: 8. Matth. 28: 19; Acts 10: 47, 48; Gal. 3: 27, 28. Rom. 6: 1-14; Col. 2: 12; 1 Pet. 3: 20, 21; Acts 22: 16. Acts 2: 41, 42; Matth. 28: 19, 20; Acts and Epistles. 1 Cor. 11: 26; Matth. 26: 26-29; Mark 14: 22-25; Luke 22: 14-21. 1 Cor. 11: 28; 5: 7, 8; 10: 3-32; 11: 17-32; John 6: 26-71.

XIII. OF THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

That the first day of the week is the Lord's day, or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and recreations ; by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public ; and by preparation for that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

Acts 20: 7; Gen. 2: 3; Col. 2: 16, 17; Mark 2: 27; John 20: 1 9; 1 Cor. 16: 1, 2. Exod. 20: 8; Rev. 1: 10; Psa. 118: 15, 24. Isa. 58: 13, 14

56: 2-8. Heb. 10: 24, 25; Acts 11: 26; 13: 44; Lev. 19: 30; Ezek. 46: 3; Luke 4: 16; Acts 17: 2, 3; Ps. 26: 8; 87: 2. Heb. 4: 3, 11.

XIV. OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

That civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society—and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed, except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

Rom. 13: 1-7; Deut. 16: 18; 2 Sam. 23: 3; Exod. 18: 23; Jer. 30: 21. Matth. 22: 21; Tit. 3: 1; 1 Pet. 2: 13; 1 Tim. 2: 1-8. Acts 5: 29; Matth. 10: 28; Dan. 3: 15-18; 6: 7-10; Acts 4: 18-20. Matth. 23: 10; Rom. 14: 4; Rev. 19: 16; Ps. 72: 11; Rom. 14: 9-13.

XV. OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED.

That there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked—that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse—and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

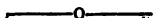
Mal. 3: 18; Isa. 5: 20; Gen. 18: 23; Jer. 15: 19; Acts 10: 34, 35; Rom. 6: 16. Rom. 1: 17; 6: 18; 1 John 2: 29; 3: 7; Rom. 6: 18, 22. 1 Cor. 11: 32; Prov. 11: 31; 1 Pet. 4: 17, 18. 1 John 5: 19; Gal. 3: 10; John 3: 36; Isa. 57: 21; Ps. 10: 4; Isa. 55: 6, 7. Prov. 14: 32; Luke 16: 25; John 8: 21-24; Prov. 10: 24; Luke 12: 4, 5; 9: 23-26; John 12: 25, 26; Eccl. 3: 17; Matth. 7: 13, 14.

XVI. OF THE WORLD TO COME.

That the end of this world is approaching—that at the last day, Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution—that a solemn separation will then take place—that the wicked will be adjudged to everlasting

ing punishment, and the righteous to endless joy—and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

1 Pet. 4: 7; 1 Cor. 7: 29–31; Heb. 1: 10–12; Matth. 24: 35; 1 John 2: 17; Matth. 28: 20; 13: 39, 49; 2 Pet. 3: 3–13. Acts 1: 11; Rev. 1: 7; Heb. 9: 28; Acts 3: 21. 1 Thess. 4: 13–18; 5: 1–11. Acts 24: 15; 1 Cor. 15: 12–59; Luke 14: 14; Dan. 12: 2; John 5: 28, 29; 6: 40; 11: 25, 26; 2 Tim. 1: 10; Acts 10: 42; Matth. 13: 49; 13: 37–43; 24: 30, 31; 25: 27–33. Matth. 25: 35–41; Rev. 22: 11; 1 Cor. 6: 9, 10; Mark 9: 43–48; 2 Pet. 2: 9, 10; Jude 7; Phil. 3: 19; Rom. 6: 22; 2 Cor. 5: 10, 11; John 4: 36; 2 Cor. 4: 18. Rom. 3: 5, 6; 2 Thess. 1: 6–12; Heb. 6: 1, 2; 1 Cor. 4, 5; Acts 17: 31; Rom. 2: 2–16; Rev. 20: 11, 12; 1 John 2: 8; 4: 17. 2 Pet. 3: 11, 12.



CHURCH COVENANT.

Now all and each of these doctrines and ordinances we look upon ourselves as under the highest obligations to embrace, maintain and defend; believing it to be our duty to stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel.

And, whereas we are very sensible, that our conversation, both in the world and in the church, ought to be as becometh the gospel of Christ, we judge it our incumbent duty to walk in wisdom towards them that are without, to exercise a conscience void of offence towards God and man, by living soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.

And, as to our regards to each other in our church communion, we esteem it our duty to walk with each other in all

humility and brotherly love, to watch over each other's conversation, to stir up each other to love and good works, to avoid all whispering, backbiting, evil-surmising and evil speaking, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as we have opportunity, to worship God according to his revealed will; and, when the case requires, to warn, rebuke and admonish each other, according to the rules of the gospel.

Moreover, we think ourselves obliged to sympathize with each other in all conditions, both inward and outward, into which the Lord by his providence may bring us; as also to bear with each other's infirmities, and particularly to pray for each other, and that the gospel and the ordinances thereof, may be blessed to the edification of each other's souls, and to the gathering in of others to Christ, besides those who are already gathered.

Of all which duties we desire to be found in the performance, through the gracious assistance of the Holy Spirit, while we both admire and adore the grace which has given us a name and a place in God's house, better than that of sons and daughters.

HINTS RESPECTING THE DUTIES OF MEMBERS.

I. TO THE CHURCH.

1. To cultivate personal piety, by daily study of the Scriptures, devout meditation and secret prayer; without which all other duties will either be neglected, or if discharged at all, be performed in a manner affording little happiness to the individual or benefit to the church. Prov. 4; 23. John 5; 39. Josh. 1; 8. Ps. 1; 2. Matt. 6: 6. Ps. 51; 10—13.

2. Not to forsake the assembling themselves together at all the meetings which the church may appoint, whether for preaching, prayer, discipline or the covenant meeting. Heb. 10; 25. Eph. 6; 18. Acts 2; 14. Rom. 12; 12.

3. To be particularly careful to be present at the administration of the Lord's Supper. Luke 22; 19. 1 Cor. 11; 24—26.

4. Diligently to improve all opportunities for obtaining religious knowledge. Heb. 5; 14. Hosea 4; 2. 2 Pet. 1; 5 and 3; 18.

5. Firmly to sustain the authority of the church in the exercise of discipline. Matt. 18; 17.

6. To contribute cheerfully to the necessary expenses of the church in the support of the ministry and the relief of the poor. 1 Cor. 9; 13, 14. 1 Tim. 5; 18. Gal. 6; 6. 1 Cor. 16; 1, 2. 1 John 3: 17.

7. To make every sacrifice, needful to promote the spirituality, purity, peace and increase of the church. Ps. 122: 6. James 3; 17. 1 Thes. 5: 13.

II. TO ONE ANOTHER.

1. To love one another, not in word only, but in deed and in truth. 1 John 3: 18.

2. In case of personal offence, to follow, *without the slightest deviation*, the course directed by our Saviour in Matthew xviii, 15—17. It may be justly inferred, that a similar course is desirable with respect to *rumors* prejudicial to the character of any individual member. Prov. xxii, 1, and xviii, 8.

3. To embrace every suitable opportunity, especially when going to or coming from the assembly of the saints, to manifest affection by the methods usually practised among friends, fulfilling the *spirit* and *intention* of the command in Rom. xvi, 16, and 1 Pet. v, 14.

4. To visit the sick and afflicted. James i, 27.

5. Faithfully to exhort, warn, and encourage one another. Heb. iii, 13. 1 Thess. v, 14. Heb. x, 25.

6. To pray both for and with one another. Eph. vi, 18. James v, 16. Col. iv, 3.

III. TO THE PASTOR.

1. To esteem him very highly in love, for his work's sake. 1 Thess. v, 12, 13. 1 Tim. v, 17.

2. To pray for him daily, especially in the closet; for his health, for his spiritual life, for his usefulness, and his continuance in the pastoral relation. Heb. xiii. 7, 8, 17, 18. 2 Cor. i. 11. 2 Thess. iii. 1, 2.

3. To receive his instructions, not with a critical but an attentive and tender spirit, seeking improvement rather than gratification. Eph. iv. 11, 12. 1 Pet. ii. 2, 3. Jas. i. 21, 22.

4. To be ready at all times to aid him, as requested, in every good work, and to bear forward with discreet zeal, such measures as he may propose, and which shall tend to the good of the church or the community. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11. Rom. xvii. 6—9. Acts ii. 42—45. 2 Tim. iv. 16.

5. To provide amply and promptly for his temporal need, that he may be free from all unnecessary worldly care, and may give himself wholly to the ministry of the word, and prayer. Phil. iv. 14—18. Gal. vi. 6. 1 Cor. ix. 11. Acts vi. 2, 4. Matt. x, 9, 10. Luke x. 7.

6. To guard carefully his reputation against slander or suspicion; to make no unnecessary exposure of errors or weaknesses, but regard such, if observed, with candor and forbearance—to place the most favorable construction on things not understood. The same in respect to his family. Acts xxiii. 4, 5. 1 Cor. xv. 10, 11. 3 John 10, 11. Gal. iv. 13, 14. Jude 10, 16.

7. To avoid harassing him with idle tales, yet withhold from him no information vitally affecting his character or usefulness. Lev. xix. 16. 2 Tim. iv. 15. 1 Cor. i. 11.

8. To exact no undue share of his time or exertions, either by visiting him in hours of study without urgent cause, or requiring visits from him—nor suspect him of partiality and inattention. Neh. vi. 3, 4. 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

IV. TO THE FAMILY.

1. If head of a family, to maintain constantly family prayer. Jer. x. 20. Job i. 5.

2. To secure the attendance of all the members where the truth is faithfully preached, that they may be led thereby “to keep the way of the Lord.” Gen. xvii. 19.

3. To instruct children carefully in the facts, doctrines, precepts, promises and prophecies contained in the word of God. 2 Tim. iii. 15. Prov. xix. 2. Eph. vi. 4.

4. To converse with their children on the goodness of God, their own sinfulness, and the only way of salvation; and to

take every pains to show them that religion is reasonable, and will make them happy. Deut. 6 : 7. Ps. 71 : 24, and 105. 2.

5. To promote the religious observance of the Lord's day, not only by attendance on divine worship, but by avoiding worldly conversation, and encouraging that of a contrary character. Gen. 2 : 2, 3. Exod. 20; 9—11.

6. If children, to be obedient to their parents in the Lord. Exod. 20 ; 12. Eph. 6 ; 1—3. Col. 3 ; 20.

7. If servants, to discharge their duties faithfully, heartily, respectfully, as unto the Lord. Eph. 6 ; 5—8. Col. 3 ; 22—25. 1 Peter 2 ; 18.

V. TO THE WORLD.

1. To make personal effort for the conversion of those to whom we are related, or with whom we are acquainted. James 5, 20. Rom. 9. 1—3, and 10. 1.

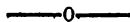
2. To watch for and judiciously to improve every suitable opportunity to speak a word in season, when engaged in the transactions of civil life, or when thrown, by journeying or other circumstances, into promiscuous company. Ps. 145; 11.

3. To maintain strict integrity in all pecuniary transactions, and unimpeachable veracity and purity in conversation ; to exhibit a readiness to relieve the temporal wants of the unconverted ; to be courteous to all, and yet never to be so pliable as to be led into sinful compliances. Levit. 19 ; 35, 36. Prov. 11: 1. Col. 3, 9. Eph. 5, 4. Gal. 6, 10. 1 Pet. 3, 8. Prov. 1, 10.

4. To lend as effective aid as possible to the extension, both at home and in foreign lands, of the preaching of the Gospel, the distribution of the Bible and of interesting and instructive books and tracts,—the instruction of the young in Sabbath

Schools, ministerial education, and associations tending to promote mental and moral improvement, and to relieve the sufferings of our fellow-men—thus to be truly fellow workers together with God in the regeneration of the world. Rom. 10. 15. Ps. 19, 7. Dan. 12, 4. Isa. 33, 6. Tit. 2, 14. Gal. 4, 18.

5. To make the conversion of the world a subject of daily fervent prayer. Luke 11, 2. Ps. 82, 15.



GENERAL REGULATIONS.

STATED MEETINGS.

Sabbath services, morning, afternoon and evening.

The Weekly Prayer and Conference Meetings on Tuesday and Friday evenings.

The regular Church Covenant Meeting occurs on the Friday afternoon and evening preceding the 1st Sunday in every month,

The Lord's Supper is administered on the first Sabbath in every month, in connection with the afternoon service.

The Sabbath School meets at the close of the morning service.

The Concert of Prayer for the Sabbath School is held on the second Sabbath evening in every month.

The Concert of Prayer for Missions is observed on the evening of the first Sabbath in every month.

Annual Church Meeting for election of officers, hearing reports, &c., occurs on Wednesday evening of the week next following the annual meeting of the Association.

DUTY OF ABSENT MEMBERS.

1. It shall be the duty of every member who may remove to any place where there is a regular Baptist Church, expecting to return within a year, to take and present to that church a letter of recommendation for occasional communion. Such member is also required to give information to this church of his or her residence and spiritual condition, once a year.

2. In case a member shall remove from this town to be absent for several years, it shall be the duty of such member to ask a letter of dismission to some regular Baptist Church in the neighborhood, and present the same within six months from the date thereof.

3. Letters of dismission and recommendation shall be valid for six months only, unless otherwise ordered by vote of the church.

4. All members of sister churches in good and regular standing who come among us, are requested to call on the pastor as soon as convenient, that a mutual acquaintance may be formed—and if they expect to reside here one year or more, they are invited to take letters of dismission and recommendation from the church to which they belong, and unite with this church.

